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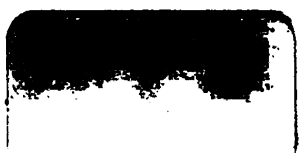
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THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR

1870—71

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Först vägen, sedan vägen!

[Signature]

("First weigh, then venture!")

[front.]

THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR

1870—71

[Julius Albert G. von, Flugk-Hartung]

BY

GENERALS AND OTHER OFFICERS

WHO TOOK PART IN THE CAMPAIGN

13180

TRANSLATED AND EDITED BY

MAJOR-GENERAL J. F. MAURICE, C.B.

Commanding Woolwich District

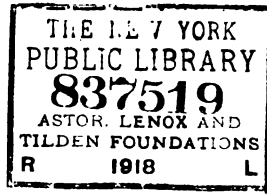
WILFRED J. LONG & A. SONNENSCHN,
Captain King's Royal Rifles *Editor of "The British Fleet"*



LONDON
SWAN SONNENSCHN AND CO., LIM.
PATERNOSTER SQUARE

1900.

CB



ROY VON
CLAREN
HAGRI

P R E F A C E

THE great War between France and Germany which is recorded in these pages is properly speaking the starting-point of the period in which we are now living. People are very fond of phrases such as "fin de siècle" "a decadent century" or what not. These appear to imply that suddenly when the year 1900 has completed its course we shall find ourselves launched into a fresh era and that all things will become new. There seems little in the past history of the World to justify these assumptions. Looking to the end of the last two previous centuries, we ourselves speak of "The glorious revolution of 1688". The French take their cycle from 1789; our American cousins theirs from 1776. More than a century surely was influenced or took new life from each of these great dates. Each of them affected many other nations besides those which now specially remember them. So also the Germany which began its career in 1870 is driving a thread through the warp and woof of the World's history that will for many a long year leave its trace on both colour and pattern.

Tumultuous as was the new birth of England in 1688, of France in 1789 and of America in 1776, and though each of them led to Wars protracted and world-convulsing, yet the birth of Germany was in this peculiar that the nation was at once involved and in some sense for the time absorbed in the foreign War through which it struggled into existence. Each of the others were efforts in the first place domestic and obviously national rather than international. The international fighting followed as a consequence of the domestic. I am much inclined to think that to a large extent the popular and general interest in the great contest on the soil of France has been marred by this fact. In a larger degree than is altogether right as a question of historical truth and historical Art, the human interest of the War of

1870 has been buried under its technical value for us soldiers. The changes in the Art of War which were made manifest by the detail of the circumstances of campaigns in which new weapons, railways, telegraphs and all the conditions of modern life were employed on a mighty scale, became for soldiers so vastly important that every technical detail was pushed into an adventitious prominence till even for us the thing that came to be called the history of the War was little other than a burden to the flesh. Such a drama as that which is set forth in Carlyle's "French Revolution" no doubt owes much of its absorbing power to the Artistic genius of the narrator himself: but the drama was there; the varieties of human character displayed in the stupendous struggle of a great nation after certain ideals and chimæras interacted under conditions in which heroism, patience, cruelty, panic, cowardice, greatness and littleness of mind and all the emotions and passions which sway mobs or single men and women had fuller scope than in almost any other episode of life and history. In many, if not in most, of its features the uprising of Germany and the wild disordered excitement with which France rushed into War in 1870, present elements of at least the same nature of interest as those which have attracted the attention of mankind in the revolutionary convulsion of the end of the last century. No mere pawns upon a chess-board were moved to win the game by von Moltke. Yet when the history of the War fell into the hands of a bureaucratic military Staff, even though that Staff was directed by the genius and the wide knowledge of von Moltke, it almost inevitably followed that the technical aspect overshadowed all others. For a time the great tomes of the Official History were a kind of military bible. It became the urgent duty of all soldiers who desired to understand the then latest phases of their art to read and re-read them. A few outside the ranks of armies were also no doubt sufficiently interested in the subject to peruse them. Nevertheless the huge volumes certainly never became popular and could not from their nature ever have been so. I should be sorry to be ungrateful for the help they have given me; but, as one whose business it has been both carefully to study and expound them and to follow the movements they describe in many successive visits to all the chief battle-fields of the War, I fear I must admit that the feeling with which I regard them is very nearly akin to that which led Sir Walter Scott, as he looked at the chief kirk in the old town of Edinboro', to exclaim with fond and pious reminiscence, "Mony a weary sermon have I heard from that pulpit." Even in the merely technical aspect

of the question, it was scarcely in the nature of things possible that the evidence should be so collated from so vast a field of War that the historical narrative should be in any way complete or correct. It has been necessary for the Staff itself to issue various brochures in order to revise and amplify the details of many parts of the campaigns. Other portions of the Official History have been riddled by the criticism of writers outside the Official circle. Taking it altogether, probably no attempt at history has been exposed to such severe handling. For all these reasons it is not surprising that there should have been a demand in Germany for some great historic treatment of the weighty theme which should bring out all its aspects with a completeness and a correctness and at the same time with a literary grace and skill such as it had been impossible that the Official History should attain. Fit writers were not wanting. What was manifestly needed was that first of all the place of the contest in the World's History should be properly assigned to it, and that then the men who carried on the work should be vividly presented to us, so that instead of mere marches and counter-marches, attacks and counter-attacks, cannonades, outflankings and such-like military detail, the story should be presented as a genuine human encounter of mind against mind, of leader against leader, of nation against nation, and that the underlying causes of strength and weakness, national as much as military, historical as well as momentary, should be laid before us. It is this that has been attempted in the book here presented for the first time to the English reader. The enthusiasm with which it has been received in Germany is of course special and hardly to be expected elsewhere, but those of us who as foreigners have read it in its original form have, I think I may say, one and all been impressed by the pains which have been taken by the publishers and editors to make it as perfect as possible. Even a casual glance over the illustrations, the portraits, the plans of battles and the maps will show that this great national work has been a labour of love and with what exhaustive effort the task has been carried through. For those who know something of the political and military literature of Germany, the list of names of the writers will be a yet stronger guarantee that it is in all respects first-rate. All of them have a European reputation. Perhaps I can hardly give a better guarantee of my own belief in the importance of the volume than by referring to my share in this translation. When my friend, Mr. Sonnenschein, first asked me to look after the English rendering of the German, for which he was undertaking the labouring oar, I, though I had ample other work on hand,

was too much fascinated by the original not to undertake to do my best to put the history into as perfect an English garb as I could supply. When, however, I came to appreciate the admirable German and the clear vigorous language in which Professor Pflugk-Harttung has clothed his deeply interesting historical sketch of the circumstances which led up to the War, I could not satisfy myself with the rendering of it without expending upon it much more time than could well be afforded if I took the same pains with the whole volume that I have taken with the first hundred pages, I surrendered my task into the hands of Captain Wilfred J. Long. I have no doubt that the latter part of the work has been most satisfactorily translated, but I could not spare the time that was necessary to make myself responsible for it. Moreover, it was the general history of Pflugk-Harttung that seemed to me to require most care in its reproduction in English. The actual record of the battles is much more closely determined in its language by exact equivalents in the military phraseology of the two countries. I do not think that Mr. Sonnenschein and I can have failed to leave some impress of the thought and learning vivified by the patriotic enthusiasm with which Pflugk-Harttung has carried out his historical study. His sketch of the secular relationship of France and Germany, of the earlier development in France of national unity and therefore of national strength, of the appalling weakness produced in Germany by the Thirty Years War, the internal struggles between Protestantism and Ultra-Montanism, between the rival houses of Hohenzollern and Habsburg, and the tendency of the smaller German powers to seek protection from France against the aggression of both the two dominant houses, seems to me to be drawn with such moderation, judgment, fairness and skill that I almost venture to think that even among Frenchmen the more impartial, philosophic and fair-minded historians would recognise it as substantially true. There is one element in it which I miss, and am not a little surprised to miss in an historical study otherwise so, for its length, complete and accurate. I am not sure whether it may not be the case that English historians, standing at a distance sufficient to enable them to watch events with something of the advantage of onlookers, have been more inclined than German have been to emphasize the importance of the point that throughout the Middle Ages "The Empire" was only by right of German conquest in theory "German." Certainly we owe the most luminous historical sketch of the continuity and persistence of the "Holy Roman Empire" to an English historian, Mr. Bryce. It may be on that account that, so far as I have

observed, English writers, even when casually noticing the question, have more usually even than modern Germans insisted on the influence exercised down almost into our own times by the tradition that "The Empire," whether that of Charlemagne, of Charles Vth or of Maria Theresa, whether its seat of dominion was Paris, Madrid or Vienna, in the orthodox view of the learned, whether lawyers, statesmen or ecclesiastics, was in fact the rightful heir, almost the continued embodiment of the Christian Empire of Rome. The "electors" of the Empire on the Civil Side corresponded to the electoral college of Cardinals on the ecclesiastical. Napoleon, when in 1804 he insisted upon the "Roman German Emperor", whose full title had been "Kaiser des Heiligen Römischen Reiches deutscher Nation", becoming simply the Emperor of Austria, did so as a preparation for his own assumption of the Imperial title as the successor of Charlemagne and Charles Vth, as though the seat of the Holy Roman Empire were simply once again transferred from Vienna to Paris. Properly speaking, therefore, the internal struggle in Germany between the Habsburgs and the Hohenzollerns, which was the essential preliminary to the national struggle against France, was in itself that between the ancient traditions of the mediæval "Empire" with the kind of prestige which surrounded it, and the growing spirit of German nationality. From its whole history the old Empire had no claim to represent a national Germany. It never had been exclusively German, and in large measure this very want of exclusive nationality had given excuse to the various princelings of Germany, without manifest treachery to the nation, to ally themselves as suited their convenience with Sweden, with Spain or with France. It hardly seems to me that the otherwise most striking study of the past history of the relations of Germany and France which opens this volume, gives adequate weight to this element in the question. When in 1848 the revolutionists offered the Crown of Germany to the King of Prussia, it was in fact the first attempt to assert by overt action the Unity of Germany as a nation, and it was for the time crushed by the superior strength of the old "Empire," not by any means German; for the mixed races that served in the ranks of the Austrian army in all probability considerably outnumbered the German-speaking people within it. ~~The sudden fusion of the German race which is so graphically described in the following pages, produced as it was by the dread of French invasion, awaking the memories of horror connected with Napoleon's conquest of Germany, produced in fact the first united movement of the German race as an organised nation. The uprising against Napoleon in 1813, though~~

inspired by a popular sentiment of very similar character, lacked, from the feebleness of the Prussian monarch and the French sympathies of many of the rulers, that organised orderly national unity which again is so admirably portrayed here. I cannot but believe that others will find the record as deeply interesting as I have done, and though perhaps the descriptions of the campaigns and battles have for me an interest as to which I am unable to judge how far it will be universally shared, I yet think that they have been so written that, whilst nothing of their historical truth has been lost, they ought from their form to appeal to popular sympathies. German newspapers, when they write about England, often seem as if their only food was gall, but English and German soldiers have fought shoulder to shoulder on so many a well-stricken field, that certainly in my experience English and German officers never meet without the most kindly feelings as of brothers in arms. That among English soldiers this volume will for all reasons I have assigned be received with a hearty welcome I have no doubt; but I think that it appeals also to a far wider audience, and that the qualities which were displayed in the patriotic effort which has given to Europe thirty years of peace, are such as, when they are fairly exhibited before the generation which has succeeded that which watched the thrilling events in which they were displayed from day to day and hour to hour, will enlist the sympathies of the whole English-speaking race.

FREDERICK MAURICE.

Woolwich, October 7, 1899.

FOR LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS SEE GENERAL INDEX.

CONTENTS

PART I

BEFORE THE WAR AND PREPARATION FOR IT

	PAGE
CHAPTER I. ORIGIN OF THE WAR. By DR. J. VON PFLUGK-HARTTUNG, Keeper of the Royal Archives in the Department of Secret State Archives at Berlin, and retired University Professor (at the time of the war: a one-year <i>Freiwilliger</i> in the 76th Infantry Regiment) . .	1—34
CHAPTER II. THE ARMIES AND WAR MATERIAL. By LIEUTENANT-GENERAL A. VON BOGUSLAWSKI (at the time of the war: Captain in command of the 12th Company of the 50th Infantry Regiment) .	35—60

PART II

MILITARY HISTORY OF THE WAR

CHAPTER I. THE MARCH TO THE RHINE. By DR. A. VON PFISTER, Major-General (at the time of the war: First-Lieutenant and Adjutant of the 1st Württemberg Landwehr Battalion).	61—72
CHAPTER II. WEISSENBERG. By DR. A. VON PFISTER	73—80
CHAPTER III. THE BATTLE OF WÖRTH. By DR. A. VON PFISTER . .	81—105
CHAPTER IV. FROM SPICHEREN TO VIONVILLE. By H. VON KRETSCHMAN, General of Infantry (at the time of the war: Major and Senior Staff Officer of the IIIrd Corps)	106—130
CHAPTER V. THE BATTLE OF VIONVILLE—MARS-LA-TOUR. By H. VON KRETSCHMAN, General of Infantry	131—153
CHAPTER VI. ST. PRIVAT-LA-MONTAGNE AND METZ. By COLMAR, BARON VON DER GOLTZ PASHA, Lieutenant-General and Turkish Marshal (at the time of the war: First-Lieutenant in the 41st Regiment and Staff Officer on the head-quarter Staff of the Second Army)	154—201
CHAPTER VII. THE ARMY OF THE MAAS AND SEDAN. By LIEUTENANT-COLONEL M. EXNER, Director of the Royal Saxon War Archives (at the time of the war: First-Lieutenant and temporarily Commander of the 3rd Heavy Battery of the 12th Artillery Regiment)	202—260
CHAPTER VIII. THE INVESTMENT OF PARIS. By A. VON HOLLEBEN, General of Infantry, Governor of Mainz (at the time of the war: First-Captain, after Christmas 1870 Major on the Staff of the 1st Division of the Guards)	261—327

	PAGE
CHAPTER IX. THE CAMPAIGN OF THE FIRST ARMY IN THE NORTH OF FRANCE. By W. BIGGE, Major on the Special Staff of the Great General Staff and Teacher at the War Academy (at the time of the war: Ensign in the 33rd Regiment)	328—376
CHAPTER X. ORLEANS. By A. VON HEINLETH, General of Infantry late Royal Bavarian Minister of War (at the time of the war: Chief of the Staff of the 1st Bavarian Corps), and MAJOR A. VON ENDRES, on the Staff of the Royal Bavarian 1st Army Corps (at the time of the war: had just completed his course of study as a law student at the University: entered the 8th Battery of the 3rd Bavarian Field Artillery Regiment as a 3-year <i>Freiwilliger</i>)	377—444
CHAPTER XI. FROM VENDÔME TO LE MANS. By H. VON KRETSCHMAN, General of Infantry (at the time of the war: Major and Senior Staff Officer of the IIIrd Corps)	445—464
CHAPTER XII. STRASSBURG, BELFORT, PONTARLIER. By LIEUTENANT-GENERAL F. OBERHOFFER, Deputy Quartermaster-General in the Great General Staff and Chief of the Ordnance Survey (at the time of the war: Captain on the Staff of the Grand-Ducal Baden Field-Division)	465—541
CHAPTER XIII. THE GUERRILLA WARFARE IN THE DISTRICTS IN REAR OF THE GERMAN ARMIES. By COLONEL G. CARDINAL VON WIDDERN (retired) [at the time of the war: First-Lieutenant in the 51st Regiment, first (July to November) Orderly Officer at the Head-Quarters of the VIth Army Corps, then Commander of the 11th Company of the 51st Regiment]	542—566
CHAPTER XIV. THE FLEET AND THE COAST. By POST-CAPTAIN A. STENZEL (retired) (at the time of the war: Commander in the Navy of the North German Confederation and Chief of the Staff of the Commander-in-Chief of the Maritime Forces in the North Sea).	567—592

PART III

POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE WAR

CHAPTER I. THE POLITICAL EVENTS. By DR. TH. FLATHE, Professor (retired) at the State School of St. Afra in Meissen (at the time of the war: Professor at St. Afra)	593—621
--	---------

PART IV

CIVIL HISTORY OF THE WAR

CHAPTER I. VERSAILLES AND THE HEAD-QUARTERS. By A. VON WERNER, Professor and Director of the Royal High School of Art (at the time of the war: artist at the Head-Quarters of the IIIrd Army).	622—643
CHAPTER II. THE RETURN FROM THE WAR. By DR. J. VON PFLUGK-HARTTUNG (<i>vide</i> Part I, Chap. I).	644—651

GENERAL INDEX. MILITARY INDEX.

PART I

BEFORE THE WAR, AND THE PREPARATION FOR IT

CHAPTER I

ORIGIN OF THE WAR

By Dr. JULIUS v. PFLUGK-HARTTUNG,

Keeper of the Royal Archives and Professor Emeritus in the University of Berlin.

HISTORY records innumerable wars, but none to be compared with the conflict of the nations in 1870/71. This is shewn by various features of the war. The magnitude of the forces arrayed, the nature of the combinations and resources of the two opposed powers, the numbers of men engaged, the technical perfection of the weapons, the organisation of the troops, and of the medical, commissariat, and transport departments; the unparalleled successes of the victors, the grandeur of the catastrophe. We have not here to do with mere battles lost and won, but with the destruction of whole armies, with the capture of hundreds of thousands.

It was in the fullest sense of the words a war of nations. It called into play all the characteristics of both races. Not the capacity for leadership of any one individual, but the national power, the spirit of the people determined the issue.

Germany and France are the two ventricles of the heart of Europe, but as such they are also close neighbours. Were they friendly neighbours, or, still more, were they united together, they would rule the world. But fate has willed it otherwise; the hostility of the two races is as old as their national life. At first Germany preponderated, whilst France was torn by internal discord; then Germany broke into fragments and France gained a powerful ascendancy. Whilst this latter power, amidst terrible convulsions at home, achieved its unity, there sprang up in Germany a fierce spirit of Particularism, which dulled the sense of unity and paralyzed its head and representative, the Emperor. Then came the Reformation, in its initial stage a source of religious solace and spiritual elevation to many. Had it laid hold of all Germany, had German Protestantism and the German Empire been co-extensive, it would have become the chief support of the state as a whole, it would have strengthened and kindled the, as yet, feeble feeling for the whole fatherland. But since one part of the nation became Protestant, whilst the other part adhered to, or returned to, the established Catholicism, the difference of Creed became a national calamity, a festering wound, imperilling the very existence of the Empire.

This spirit of Discord burst out into flame in the murderous Thirty Years' War, which reduced Germany to a desert, impoverished it economically, and wasted its moral and intellectual forces. The very idea of the fatherland as a united nation was lost amidst the clash of arms, the quarrels and disputes of parties. The foreigner came into the land, called in by some and opposed by others, according to the dictates of vulgar, personal interests. The feeling that he was a foreigner who had his own selfish purposes to serve, that on the other side was a German brother, in union with whom alone the country's welfare could be secured, this most natural of sentiments had lost all force.

Under the dictation of the foreigner the Peace of Westphalia put an end to this lamentable war. It practically abolished the Empire and reduced the German realm from a common fatherland to a feeble bundle of states with divergent views and interests.

Now this time of Germany's misfortune, of her deepest political degradation, occurred at the very moment when France reached its proudest development.

The ossified and dogmatic religious tendencies of Germany worked the ruin of the country, whilst in France the Roman Catholic Cardinal Richelieu, by skilfully concentrating all political power in the hands of his King, founded an Absolute Monarchy, and thereby a national unity which gave to his country a start in the race, which it enjoyed for centuries.

Popular energy, in Germany frittered away in internal squabbles, was in France directed against neighbouring states and fed by the love of glory inborn in the Gallo-Frankish race. France felt that her power gave her the rights of an Over-Lord and justified her in mixing herself up in every dispute; nothing could as a rule be allowed to take place without the consent of France. This over-stimulated patriotism, this seething unrest directed against foreign countries became for France a source both of grandeur and of weakness. It found its fullest expression under Louis XIV. To his ambitious nature the pushing forward of his frontiers justified itself; and he had no scruple in covering their borders with a line of smoking ruins.

This passion of aggression gained in intensity in proportion as French political life died out in the provinces and was concentrated in the Capital. Here the King ruled despotically, and the importance of Paris consisted mainly in its reflecting the splendour of the throne. Though that splendour waned, Paris only became more powerful.

The Revolution broke out. The Capital overthrew the Royal Power, assumed its functions and constituted itself the Ruler of the country. And it was just at this time, under wholly altered political conditions, that the idea, royal in its origin, of the pre-eminence of the sacred Power of France gained its most irresistible force.

It was then that the greatest son of the Revolution led his victorious regiments across the Rhine, that the wings of the Imperial Eagle in its youthful vigour overshadowed all Central, and Southern Europe, and holding the lightning in its grasp sent fiery bolts towards the warm banks of the Tagus, to the foot of burning Aetna and to the icy plains of Moscow. This iron yoke which crushed the nations seemed to France a perfectly natural state of things. And when Napoleon's star had set, when Bourbon, and Orleans, Republic, and Empire attained power in rapid succession,—amidst all changes the idea that it was essential that the power of France should be supreme remained as a fixed idol, and every ruler in Paris had to offer incense at its shrine.

The prime condition of France's greatness was the weakness of her neighbours.

To maintain that, and to increase it, was the pivot of the foreign policy of Richelieu. It was crowned with success. Spain, once dominant by land and by sea, became impoverished, sickened and was now in a despicable condition. Italy and Germany were split up into small states, each of which had to look out for itself as best it could. Italy offered no scope for large and bold enterprise; its largest state, Naples, was distant and distracted. Not so Germany; it contained two states of notable vital power: Austria and Prussia. Both of them, however, looked to the East, to Poland, Hungary and Turkey as their field of expansion; Western Germany lay exposed to the grip of France.



PRINCE BISMARCK.

Another factor must be taken into account. The Thirty Years' War destroyed Imperial unity by making it the primary object of German states,—especially of the greatest, Austria—to secure the power of the ruling house. This circumstance was favourable to the rise of a Second Power, Brandenburg-Prussia, which steadily advanced. Hence arose opposition to the older state, opposition between South-German and North-German between Hapsburgh and Hohenzollern; germs of death in the afflicted Realm.

The Seven Years' War certainly decided in favour of Hohenzollern, but in its train followed distrust, bitterness and hostility, and it largely prepared the way for

Napoleon's world-wide dominion. Even at a later date, it made itself felt. It was Austria who, at the Congress of Vienna, in alliance with France rent Prussia into two disconnected halves. In their dislike of the inconvenient neighbour Metternich and Talleyrand overlooked the fact that by their joint action they were determining, not the future of Prussia only, but of the whole of Germany.

Had they satisfied Prussia's ambition by allotting to her an increase in her Polish territory, they would have formed a heterogeneous kingdom with its centre of gravity towards the East, and the Rhine frontier would have remained weak. But instead of that they placed one half of Prussia on the Rhine as an impregnable bulwark against France, and rendered it a political necessity for Prussia to aim at the junction of the two severed halves of her kingdom; in other words Prussia as a consequence sought to absorb the centre of Northern Germany. This blunder of the superwise politicians at the Vienna Congress pointed out to Frederick the Great's kingdom the path it had to follow almost in spite of itself.

The crushing pressure of Napoleon's despotism, the ruthless violation of the most sacred and cherished interests of the Germans had taught them that they were a nation, one great nation with common aims and interests. In the War of Liberation ¹ they for the first time recovered this as an effective force of real value against the alien. But diplomacy ignored it and set up the German Confederation as a prolongation of the unnatural policy of the Peace of Westphalia. ² The disunion and impotence of Germany became international law for the benefit of Austria and for the fruition and gain of the covetous neighbour in the West. ³

Next Prussia shattered this misbegotten thing by force of arms. ⁴ But in fact Prussia's victory at Königgrätz not only humbled Austria, but also altered the relative international power of France. Very naturally then Austria invoked the intervention of France, her ally in the creation of the political conditions overthrown by that battle. But equally naturally Count von Bismarck, Prussia's Foreign Minister, who aimed at the termination of this state of things, strove to ward off France's participation in the peace negotiations and to come to terms with Austria alone. The methods by which he gained his end without ceding an inch of German territory formed one of his greatest political masterstrokes.

The effect of the Peace of Prague ⁵ was enormous. It put an end to the unhealthy condition of affairs which involved all the small states in the squabble between the two Great Powers. Austria withdrew, and Prussia gained strength by absorbing the small states that had separated the two halves of her kingdom. Prussia thus aggrandized gathered under her hegemony all the territories on the right bank of the River Maine and formed the North German Confederation, thereby disposing of all the military forces of Northern Germany. The South German States ⁶ retained their independence, but wedged in between two Great Powers they had to seek support, and found it in a close alliance with North Germany. Old Germany had disappeared,

¹ In 1813, 14, 15 to shake off the Napoleonic yoke. [*The Translators.*]

² In 1648, at the conclusion of the Thirty Years' War; see *supra*, p. 3. [*Trs.*]

³ France. [*Trs.*]

⁴ In 1866, half a century after its birth. [*Trs.*]

⁵ At the end of the Seven Weeks' War between Austria and Prussia in 1866. [*Trs.*]

⁶ Baden, Württemberg and Bavaria. [*Trs.*]

a new state was ushered in, smaller in extent, but more homogeneous in its population and more powerful by community of interests and by being led by a single Great Power able to lay down the law. Still no finality had yet been reached. The question was how and when that would be secured.

That which thus promised Prussia splendid results was for the Emperor of the French a political defeat. After the signature of the Peace of Prague he wrote: "I distinctly saw that war with Prussia was inevitable." Bismarck no doubt shared his view. He asked Russia to keep Austria in check, if it came to a rupture between Prussia and France. What was for Napoleon and Bismarck a conviction was the ardent desire of many, especially of the officers of both the French and Prussian



NAPOLEON III.

armies. With what eagerness the chief of the Prussian General Staff looked forward to this war is shewn by these words of Moltke: "If I could but have the handling of our army in this war, the Devil is welcome to these old bones as soon as it is over." But Moltke was a Prussian soldier and, as such, he was without political power; he waited till he was spoken to and received orders. In Germany no War party existed. All felt that there was enough to do to digest the results of the Peace of Prague.

It was otherwise in France. Ever since the times of Louis XIV, and still more since the Revolution, France had felt herself to be the leading warlike Power, which had been dammed back only by the overwhelming numbers of the states allied against her. Till now her preponderance on the continent had been unquestioned; Germany had been

reduced to impotence. Now this latter country, without asking France, had created itself into an independent Power of equal rank. Prussia's victories roused France's jealousy; the splendour of Solferino ¹ paled before that of Königgrätz. The irritable national pride of the French regarded this as a piece of arrogance, as a challenge and offence, and felt inwardly a gnawing sense of degradation. ²

A leading Power could not submit to that, since the arms of France, and not those of Prussia, were first in the world! The Mexican adventure had only brought barren laurels and had cost enormous sums of money. The French Government stood in need of some substantial gain, of something tangible to overshadow the latest



GENERAL VON MOLTKE.

events. These feelings forced into the foreground a sentiment concisely formulated by Danton ³ in these words: "The frontiers of France, as fixed by Nature, are the Ocean, the Rhine, the Alps and the Pyrenees." It expressed the passionate demand for the left bank of the Rhine, as the natural frontier of France. This longing of France, fostered and stimulated by poets and historians, was very ancient and had led to wars under the Carolingian Kings. ⁴ It was again active in the 12th Century,

¹ The Battle of Solferino was won by France against Austria in 1859. [*Trs.*]

² The Battle of Königgrätz was won by Prussia against Austria in 1866. [*Trs.*]

³ One of the most prominent leaders of the Revolution. [*Trs.*]

⁴ The Carolingian Dynasty was founded by Charlemagne, who ascended the throne of the Franks in 768, and was crowned Roman Emperor A.D. 800. [*Trs.*]

under Philip Augustus ¹ and Charles VII, ² was after that roused by the acquisitions of Henry II, ³ and its influence under Louis XIV was specially virulent; while the Revolution and Napoleon I had actually satisfied it.

It is true that this conquest had no permanence, but it was not forgotten, and least of all by Napoleon III, the heir of the name, crown and traditions of the Corsican despot. From the commencement of his reign Napoleon III aimed at extending the frontiers of France westwards, but as it was dangerous to attempt this in opposition to Prussia, he endeavoured to gain her over and to attain his end by peaceful means. As early as 1855 he said: "Prussia understands her interests, and will willingly transfer to me two million subjects, if in return she may annex ten or twelve in Germany." ⁴ This hunger for the Rhine border-land became gradually a fixed idea of Napoleon's. Amidst the most tortuous changes of policy he always reverted to it—always without success, and chiefly because he did not take what never was given him. Ollivier was not altogether at fault when he said: "After his Italian campaign (in 1859) Napoleon was a systematically peaceful ruler." It was this which greatly aided Bismarck in carrying out his political aims.

Now Prussia had annexed "millions" by the sword, without any gain whatever to France. Expansion into the North German Confederation, her treaties with the South German states, the identity of Prussian and German interests bound her honourably to guard these, and thus, were it only because of her national position, to be unfavourable to the cherished hopes of the French. During the peace negotiations between Austria and Prussia ⁵ Napoleon had strongly urged his claims to the greater part of the territories between the Moselle and the Rhine. To this Bismarck had replied: "That means War." Napoleon ill, uncertain and unready did not venture to draw the sword. The speedy settlement between Austria and Prussia upset all the calculations of French diplomacy. France felt herself doubly defeated, by the loss of her position as the dominating power and by getting no compensation. All the more because Austria had hitherto been regarded as the power whose might was inimical to France was this feeling now turned against Prussia. Every German had on French lips the odious taste of a Prussian—a "Prussien". On the one side was an ancient Power who thought herself very ill used, on the other side was young Germany under the leadership of pushful Prussia—on both sides a policy of action. There was now a political problem that had to be solved.

Did the future belong to Germany or to France? In Paris especially people wished to know the solution, because everybody there looked upon success as certain for them, and wanted the world to be convinced that such was the case.

The steel was already, where it could be drawn in secret, flashing in men's hands. War was in the air. Any spark might set it ablazing.

¹ The partner of Richard Coeur de Lion in the Crusade. [*Trs.*]

² The King whom Joan of Arc made victorious against England. [*Trs.*]

³ He took Metz by treachery. [*Trs.*]

⁴ He could not understand that even if a Hohenzollern could have been found to play the part of traitor to Germany, the resentment of all Germany would have been fatal to the Prussian dynasty. [*Trs.*]

⁵ In 1866. [*Trs.*]

Thus it was not the French Government that led on to the catastrophe: it was an inarticulate popular instinct, inflamed by the press.

The Emperor Napoleon shrank from war, because it upset a satisfactory condition of things and was a hazardous venture. As things stood, France occupied the leading position, and he sat on the throne of France. A successful war would only bring him an increase of what he already possessed; an unsuccessful war might lose him all. But just because of his uncertainty and of his increasing infirmities he yielded to the restless importunities of others more than he either wished or willed. The watchword, "Revenge for Sadowa"¹ frightened him forward. As far as could be managed



GENERAL VON ROON, MINISTER OF WAR.

preparation was made for war. The Minister of War, Marshal Niel, tried to introduce universal military service, and gave the army a new infantry rifle and new artillery. He demanded that the army should be doubled, as a protection against the grasping encroachments of Prussia.

Prussia having aggrandised herself, France yearned for territorial compensation, and as German land was not to be had, she coveted Luxemburg. This small country was in personal union with Holland, but it was a fortress belonging to the late German Confederation (the Bund) and was occupied by a Prussian garrison. The German Confederation having ceased to exist, the Prussian right to garrison Luxemburg had

¹ The Battle of Sadowa is another name for the Battle of Königgrätz; vide supra, p. 6. [Trs.]

become doubtful. Napoleon tried to acquire the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg by purchase and by diplomatic pressure brought to bear on the King of Holland in his capacity of Grand Duke of Luxemburg. He so far succeeded that the King-Grand-Duke promised to agree to the cession provided that the consent of Prussia was obtained. As soon as these negotiations were made public the waves of popular passion rose high both in France and Germany. The North German Diet looked upon Luxemburg as ancient German territory and demanded its protection by arms. The Prussian Generals were all eager for war. As yet the reorganisation of the French army was not completed; as yet the French soldiers were armed with muzzle-loaders only, whilst the Prussian soldiers handled the victorious needle-gun. Accordingly Moltke said: "Although in all sincerity I do not long for a new war, yet I am forced to wish that the opportunity thus offered for a war with France should be seized. The fact is this. I, unfortunately, consider that a war with France within the next five years is absolutely inevitable, and within that time our present indisputable superiority in equipment and organisation will have disappeared. The sooner we come to blows, the better." Bismarck and the War-minister Von Roon thought differently; they inclined to peace, because the North German Confederation required three years to attain its full military expansion, and Bismarck shrank from the responsibility of provoking a war, except to defend some vital interest or the honour of the country. And yet he too was persuaded that war would come, must come, and that it was only a question of seizing the right moment. Amidst all these considerations, pro and con, King William's voice settled the question; he would have no war.

At the Hague Bismarck announced that the King-Grand-Duke was at liberty to take what course he pleased in the matter, but he begged that the susceptibilities of Germany should not be ignored. The King of Holland, who had made his concession only from fear of France, now recovered courage and withdrew, saying that the consent of Prussia not having been secured, his promise had lost all binding force. The Parisians became furious, but they did not venture to strike. A new proposal that Prussia should be at liberty to annex South Germany, on condition of her aiding France in the acquisition of Belgium also led to no result.

In order to be able to show that she had gained at least some little advantage, France demanded the withdrawal of the Prussian garrison from Luxemburg, and carried her point at a conference of the Great Powers in London, but on condition that the neutrality of Luxemburg should be guaranteed.

With this meagre result France had to be content; and the ailing Emperor put it thus: "It is fortunate that an honourable settlement has been arrived at; had it come to a rupture, the war would have been terrible." It was as though an inward voice had warned him: "Avoid war with Prussia; it will be thy doom."

The two nations took a different view from their leaders. It happened as it always does when outsiders arbitrate in a quarrel where each of two parties expects to gain a certain object. Neither Prussia nor France were satisfied.

Prussia's North German allies felt that victorious Prussia had given way to the threats of France. The question of right was felt less keenly than the mere fact of yielding. As for France! Why, Frenchmen felt that Prussia had swallowed up province after province and France had permitted it; now when a claim was made for a like complacency, this Prussia, this insatiable glutton, would not yield up a single

morsel. That is infamous, and in fact only possible because the government of the wisest and greatest of all nations shows itself stupid and irresolute. But now the limit has been reached! No further extension of Prussia must be permitted, and a government which watched so little over the interests of France must be combated at home and urged on to energetic enterprise abroad. The Parisians were dissatisfied; they found peace dull and felt bored; they wanted something new; new glory and new splendour.

It was looked upon as an absolute necessity for war that Prussia should extend her power southwards and admit the South German States into the North German Confederation, thus effecting the unification of Germany under the Hegemony of Prussia. That was definitely Bismarck's intention and it must be carried out, although the view France would take of it was well known to all. War was certain, unless



PRESIDENT OLLIVIER.

either the death of Napoleon, whose ill-health was steadily gaining on him, or domestic disturbances prevented it. Bismarck certainly wished to postpone the inevitable, because every year that was gained added 100,000 men to the German forces. On the other hand he wished to avoid all pressure upon Bavaria and Württemberg, and indeed everything that might in the least degree annoy them. He wished them to act of their own free will, and declared that the admission of the South German States was possible only, if they all of them agreed in asking for it. In the then circumstances at home and abroad there was little immediate prospect of this, nor therefore of war. Prussia and France stood like two masters of fence, sword in hand, each closely watching every movement of the other and each fully determined to yield no advantage to his antagonist.

In Prussia preparations were made without much talk about it. Silently and busily Moltke perfected his schemes of mobilisation and drew up his plan of campaign. All France, on the other hand, bubbled and boiled as if in a witch's cauldron.

The current of opposition to the Emperor ran day by day more strongly, in the press, in parliament, even in the army. Thiers' saying that France had sunk down to a power of third rank was daily echoed and re-echoed in all the opposition journals. As the reorganisation of the army proceeded the belief in the military superiority of France grew in intensity. When possessed of chassepots and mitrailleuses they deemed themselves invincible. This conviction was strengthened by the declarations of Marshal Niel. "We are ready for war," resounded in every corner; "ready, perfectly ready, what are we waiting for?"

Napoleon was in a very painful position. Although he was not aware of all the shortcomings of his army, yet he knew enough not to dream of assured victory. He looked round morbidly for some lucky chance, for some external support. In vain he

tried to make the Belgian lines of railway form a part of the French railway system. In vain he once more proposed in Berlin his Belgian schemes; in vain he offered alliance to Austria and Italy. Nothing that he attempted would now prosper in his hands. The din of parties round him became therefore ever louder and more reckless; he himself felt depressed, under every sort of influence and without any will of his own.

To allay the storm and to rid himself of responsibility he replaced his Imperial-autocratic government, by a constitution, and put M. Ollivier, the leader of the moderate party, at the head of affairs. M. Ollivier was amicably disposed towards Germany, and had expressed the opinion that France should allow the natural development of



PRINCE KARL ANTON VON HOHENZOLLERN.

events in Germany, and should accept the unification of North and South Germany without fear or misgiving. Accordingly he seemed to be the very man that Napoleon wished for to direct his foreign policy, not a man to provoke war, but one likely to preserve peace. This is proved by actual facts no less than by Ollivier's own assurance in his work, "L'Empire Liberal," where he says: "The history of the ministry of the 2nd of January recalls to the mind the story of the musicians in Romeo and Juliet, who, summoned to a wedding festival, had to play a dirge. This liberal ministry, even more honestly and passionately peaceful than it was liberal, was forced to become a ministry of war. It was unable to arrest the impending fate, but was swept along, overwhelmed and conquered by it." Ollivier had hardly formed his Cabinet, before

Napoleon, in February 1870, proposed to the Great Powers a general disarmament; this Prussia declined. By this action, dictated by his nervous longing for peace, he had actually moved a step nearer to war. The state of affairs at home was still more discouraging; from the new men he derived as little support as he did from the plebiscite, which even in the army shewed 60,000 negative votes, estranged the majority in the Chambers and threw the reins on the neck of radicalism. The socialist Rochefort, in his "Lanterne," unmercifully scourged the Imperial administration. Hostile manifestations and small tumults in the streets of Paris shewed the agitated and restless state of the capital. The Clericals, Royalists and Republicans, even the War-party with the Empress Eugenie at its head, egged on the populace. It was



PRINCE LEOPOLD VON HOHENZOLLERN.

evident that only an extraordinary event would infuse renewed energy into the moribund empire; and no achievement could be more alluring than the humiliation of Prussia.

If the general political situation was looked at superficially many circumstances appeared to promise victory to France. Her population was full of national pride and was convinced that the state of affairs beyond the Rhine could not be maintained, and that Prussia was hated all over Germany. It was hoped that in case of war Ultramontanes,¹ Radicals, Particularists² and Guelphs³ would side with France,

¹ Ultra Roman Catholics. [*Trs.*]

² Home Rulers. [*Trs.*]

³ Hanoverian adherents of the displaced dynasty. [*Trs.*]

and that especially would this be the case in Southern Germany, where the introduction of the Prussian army-organisation was detested. Austria had not yet forgotten the defeat of Königgrätz, nor Denmark the loss of Schleswig-Holstein; while in Italy French sympathies mostly prevailed, and strongly influenced the King Victor Emmanuel. Every postponement of the war worked politically to the advantage of Prussia; it was reported that in Prussia a change in the needle-gun was being carried out; moreover, the small states and the neighbours of Prussia were more and more adapting themselves to the new political circumstances. On the other hand, certain proceedings in the North German Reichstag seemed to shew the existence of a thorough dislike of the army. It had been there maintained that militarism crushed out culture, prosperity and liberty; that it was unnecessary, because peace reigned everywhere; that Prussia had been the first to increase her army and should therefore be also the first to think of reducing it.

The Reichstag did not restrict itself to mere speeches, but refused all the taxes that were laid before them as sources of revenue, in order to make the government feel its dependence upon parliament. Bismarck observed ironically: "Members seem to fancy that the centre of gravity of the Prussian administration is not in its right place." While in France they thought themselves justified in basing hopes upon this state of affairs, there were no doubt Germans who reflected that only four years had elapsed since similar and indeed much sterner opposition had been quelled by the victorious arms of the soldiers in the field, and that the country possessed an army and a staff which had been victorious in two wars.¹

Nevertheless profound peace prevailed, and not the lightest cloud appeared on the political horizon. Yet it was sultry as before a storm, more sultry than even the leaders themselves were aware of. A gust of wind—then the clouds gathered and the storm broke devastatingly over the plains.

King William had gone to Ems to take the waters; Bismarck, Moltke and Roon were on their estates, minding their crops, and Count Benedetti, the French ambassador in Berlin, had gone to Wildbad for the benefit of the waters. On the 30th of June Ollivier declared: "At no time was peace more assured than now; in no direction could a question be detected that was at all dangerous." Only twelve days later, war was declared.

Far off in distant Spain Queen Isabella had been dethroned and exiled. A provisional government had been formed. The next point was to find a man to wear the crown of the kingdom that had once ruled the world. Portugal and Italy having been approached in vain, attention was directed to Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern. He was a man of capacity, of commanding presence, catholic but not ultramontane, and related to the ruling families of Portugal, France and Prussia. He was a Prussian prince, but without hereditary rights to the Prussian throne; his brother Charles had, with Napoleon's consent, ascended the throne of Roumania, and his father was a personal friend both of Napoleon and of King William. Three times a Spanish embassy came and departed.

Opinions are sharply at issue as to the events which led on to war. The French have regarded it all as an intrigue of Bismarck; the Germans have maintained that he was absolutely free from all share in it. A work entitled: "Memoranda of an Eye-

¹ The Danish War in 1864 and the Austrian War in 1866. [*Trs.*]

witness on the life of King Charles of Roumania," throws valuable light on this question. It supplies extracts from contemporary letters of Prince Karl Anton of Hohenzollern. In these, personal opinions may here and there have been introduced, but no false statements of facts. "His Royal Highness, the present Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern, the former Hereditary Prince, the man chiefly interested, graciously informed me that the narrative of events preceding the war of '70/71 is perfectly correct and true and based upon documentary evidence." According to this work then, the series of incidents was as follows. ¹

As far back as October 1868, the name of Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern was given by the Spanish papers as one of the possible candidates for the Spanish throne. Don Salazar y Mazarredo, an influential councillor of state and member of Parliament, espoused the cause of Hohenzollern very warmly, and advocated it in February 1869 in a memorial, which made a deep impression and passed through successive editions. In September Salazar presented himself secretly to Prince Karl Anton, the head of the South German line of Hohenzollern, ² and enquired whether his son Leopold would accept the crown. Previously, Karl Anton had disliked the "position, which glittered with the veriest tinsel", but now when the circumstances of Spain had improved and the prospect of the aggrandisement of his house had been seriously presented to him, he seemed no longer adverse to the idea. Only he believed that his second son, Prince Charles of Roumania, was a more suitable candidate than his son Leopold, who had little ambition. But the Prince of Roumania, looking upon this change of throne as an act of desertion towards his people, declined the honour. The negotiator was then given as final the answer that, if the candidature of Prince Leopold was to be taken into serious consideration, it was indispensable that certain conditions should be fulfilled, and primarily this, that the election must be unanimous and that no rival candidate should be proposed.

Towards the end of February 1870 Salazar again travelled to Germany, but this time to Berlin, as Plenipotentiary from his Government, officially to offer the crown. King William was reticent; he refused to receive the ambassador, but summoned Karl Anton and Leopold to Berlin. Both thought that the offer should be declined, and the Prince especially felt a strong repugnance to accept a crown to which so many dethroned families laid claim. Not so Bismarck; he warmly advocated its acceptance, and in a memorial which he handed in, he laid stress on the great significance it would have for Germany, if a Hohenzollern were called to occupy the Spanish throne. He dwelt on the economical and political importance to Germany of having in the rear of France a country with monarchical traditions favourably disposed to her. Careful discussions ensued, and finally the Prince declared that he would accept the crown only if higher political considerations, the interests of Germany and Prussia demanded it. On the 15th of March a consultation was held in the castle, under the presidency of the King, at which the Crown Prince, Prince Karl

¹ Sybel's luminous exposition in his "History of the Foundation of the New German Empire" is well known. VII, pp. 235 et seq. Delbrück in the Prussian "Jahrbichte," Feb. '95, bases his statements on these Memoranda; so does, with more detail, E. Brandenburg in the supplement to the Allgem. Zeitung 1895, Nos. 42 and 43. This is not the case with the "Hamburger Nachrichten," 1895, No. 44.

² The Hohenzollerns are by descent South Germans. [Trs.]

Anton, the hereditary Prince Leopold, Bismarck, Roon, Moltke, Schleinitz, Thile, and Delbrück were present. Bismarck warmly advocated acceptance. The Crown Prince anticipated numerous difficulties, and considered the situation in Spain as very unstable. The unanimous decision of this board of councillors was in favour of acceptance, as it was regarded as the discharge of a patriotic duty to Prussia.¹ The King adopted a middle course; he abstained from all intervention and left the decision wholly to the inclination of the Prince, who thus obtained a free hand. Had he been ambitious of reigning, he would have eagerly grasped the crown, but next day he declined it "for many reasons and after severe internal struggles." Nevertheless, neither the Prince (Karl Anton) nor Bismarck allowed the candidature to drop. The latter sent early in April two confidants, Lothar Bucher and an officer of the General Staff, to Spain, to examine matters on the spot.

The Prince (Karl Anton) summoned his youngest son, Frederick, and proposed to him the succession to the throne, but found him still less predisposed in favour of it. All efforts to alter his views proved unavailing. King William observed towards Prince Frederick the same attitude that he observed towards Prince Leopold. Madrid was urgent. Had the King at the last moment given any orders, Prince Frederick would have obeyed—but this was not done. In the month of May a wire was sent to Spain, that if a positive offer were made, Prince Leopold would not entertain it. This was not exactly an official telegram to the Spanish Government, but was merely sent by the Prince to the Privy Councillor Bucher, who communicated it to General Prim. He, however, did not accept the refusal, but persisted in maintaining a hopeful attitude. The question remained accordingly undecided, and could at any time be re-opened. Bismarck had just fallen ill and had to leave Berlin. He was much chagrined at the failure of the Spanish projects; and Prince Karl Anton wrote to Karl of Roumania: "A great historic opportunity has been lost to the house of Hohenzollern, an opportunity such as never has occurred and will probably never present itself again."

The refusal of Prince Leopold soon became known; the Spanish ambassador and the Roumanian Chargé d'Affaires learnt it. It may be looked upon as certain that Napoleon was not left in ignorance of it. Hitherto he had allowed things to take their course, and he did so even now, without expressing a distinct opinion either way. The French ambassador in Madrid did not venture to take any steps against the Hohenzollern candidature, from fear lest the Spaniards should insist on that candidature simply because it was opposed by France. He was instructed to maintain entire reticence. The two German confidants returned from Spain, and brought with them extremely favourable impressions, so that the King thought their report too rosy. Not so Prince Leopold, who, influenced by Bismarck and his father, began more and more to feel it a grave responsibility if he refused to listen to an honest call, and thereby drove a people that wished to become his people into disorder and civil war. Towards the

¹ The "Hamburger Nachrichten" 1895, No. 44, asserted that this meeting had never taken place. The King had only consulted Bismarck, Moltke and Roon each separately. I adopt the distinct statements in the "Memoranda". The private consultations may have taken place as well.

[Note by Author.]

Bismarck, on the other hand, in his *Gedanken und Erinnerungen* (1898) denies (vol. II, p. 81) the correctness of these memoranda, and expressly states that this cabinet-council (*sic*) in the castle was never held. [*Trs.*]

end of May he told his father that he was willing to accept the crown under certain defined conditions, because he hoped thereby to render a service to his native land. As soon as Count Bismarck was informed of this, he wrote to the Prince and urged him in the interest of Germany to reopen the Spanish question; he wrote to Madrid saying that the negotiations about the candidature must be carried on with the court of Sigmaringen, and that the court of Berlin must not be mixed up with it. If Bismarck took this step, it may safely be assumed that he did not act against the views of his King, who was continually kept in touch with the progress of affairs, and did not at any time change his expectant attitude.

Meanwhile the necessity of finding an occupant for the vacant throne was felt more and more keenly in Spain, so that the more favourable prospects in Germany were no doubt heard of with delight.

Salazar started for the third time, but on this occasion direct for the princely court, with the definite offer of the crown, accompanied by the pledge that the assent of the Cortes would be obtained. He arrived on the 16th of May, and found the court favourably disposed. It had been represented to the Prince "from a quarter of the highest repute," that interests of state demanded his acceptance. He resolved to set aside all personal considerations and to submit to this imperious necessity. He wrote in this sense to the King at Ems, saying that he accepted the crown, as he dared to hope that thereby he was rendering a great service to his native land, and begged for the King's consent. King William replied that the Prince had full liberty of action and that he approved of his plan.¹

Taking now a general survey of the sequence of events, we find two groups—King William and the Hereditary Prince on the one side, the Spanish Government, Bismarck and Prince Karl Anton on the other.

To the very last King William remained unfavourable to the candidature. Never, not even privately, had he advised or advocated acceptance, but had only yielded to and finally admitted the force of the arguments advanced by the other party. He did not trust the Spaniards. In his capacity of King of Prussia he could not assume obligations abroad and extraneous responsibility merely to advance the interests of his family; and in this case all the less could he do so, because the valid decision had not to be given by him, but by Prince Karl Anton, the head of the house.

Prince Leopold preserved a thoroughly princely high-minded reticence. He anticipated numerous unpleasantnesses very distasteful to himself. The candidature might succeed, but, in the unsettled state of Spanish affairs, it might also fail and sink down to a mere adventure, as the empire of Archduke Maximilian in Mexico had recently done. On this account he wished to place King William under an obligation, in order to find in him some ultimate support, but the Crown Prince (of Prussia) had distinctly warned him that such support would not be given. Not so the father, Prince Karl Anton. He had confidence in his sons, and saw a future opening before his family, exceeding his most sanguine hopes or dreams. Therefore he did all in his power to secure this future.

And Bismarck? As German Chancellor he set the interests of Germany steadily before his eyes, and he was a practical statesman. According to the "Memoranda,"

¹ In the "Memoranda" these facts are reported under the date of June 4th; this tallies neither as a matter of historical sequence nor of chronology with the section "At the beginning of June."

he declared that the acceptance was a political necessity and a patriotic duty. He was anxious not to miss the opportunity, which once lost could never be recovered, of placing a Hohenzollern on the Spanish throne and thereby withdrawing Spain from the sphere of French influence. This would in the first instance be felt commercially, and would open a new market for the manufactures of Germany, now aspiring to develop largely her industries. But political combinations might also be hoped for at some future time. Leopold's brother Karl had shewn in Roumania what great changes in a country might be effected by the firm hand of a single man.

It does not follow that Bismarck was prepared to carry through the Hohenzollern candidature even at the risk of a rupture with France. Far from it, he did every thing possible to deprive her of any pretext for war. All that the King did in the matter was to summon the Hohenzollerns to Berlin, and to hold in the castle, on the 15th of March, a council under his own presidency. After that he held back altogether, and to all questions submitted to him he answered as kinsman only, and not as King. Bismarck acted differently. As soon as the Spanish question was presented to him, he became in a bold spirit of enterprise the chief advocate of the Hohenzollern candidature. Of course he acted as far as possible merely as private adviser and not as Chancellor of the Empire. But how could he draw the line? By sending his most intimate confidant to Spain, by writing to Prim, by urging the Prince to open the Spanish question again, he exceeded the functions of a private individual. Nevertheless he kept the official correspondence of the Prussian Embassy in Madrid and all official notes clear of this business. Officially the negotiations and transactions only concerned Spain and the South German Hohenzollerns. To these the French had to apply, if they wanted to know anything of this matter. But even independently of that, there seemed just then little danger of war. Napoleon was physically a great sufferer and careful to avoid excitements; the condition of France at home was such that an unsuccessful war could not but overthrow the throne, and even a successful war might not exclude unforeseen events. Ollivier, the chief of the French cabinet, was friendly to Germany; Daru was the Foreign Secretary, and after his resignation on April 14th Ollivier provisionally filled this post also. Considering the undoubted dislike of war on the French side, and the friendly disposition of Napoleon towards the Hohenzollerns of South Germany, it was to be expected that the affair of the Spanish candidature would blow over like the Luxemburg business, with much cry and little wool. Nevertheless the possibility of a rupture had to be taken into consideration. According to the "*Hamburger Nachrichten*," King William had consulted Moltke and Roon. Prince Karl Anton had, in December 1868, declared his belief that France would not consent to the establishment of a Hohenzollern beyond the Pyrenees.

From a French point of view it was self-evident that a Hohenzollern on the throne of Spain must be an object of intense dislike, to some extent an evident danger. Every consideration that made it desirable for Bismarck made it detestable in Paris. Napoleon told Benedetti that France would not endure Leopold's ascending the throne, and that it must be prevented by all means. Diplomatically he did not express this sentiment either in Berlin, or in Sigmaringen, or in Madrid, although he had been informed of Salazar's first journey. Napoleon's irresolution was no doubt an encouragement to Bismarck's hopes.

During the consultations Prince Karl Anton proposed that Napoleon's assent should be secured. General Prim was against it, and Count Bismarck stood up for

Spain's right to decide on her destiny. He that asks questions gets an answer. If any official communication was addressed to France, it was possible that, instead of approval, a refusal might be sent; better progress would be made in all essentials, if this refusal were not provoked,—that is to say, if everything were done secretly, as Bismarck had all along advised.

Accordingly arrangements were devised for keeping everything quite secret. The election of the King was to take place as soon as Salazar had returned to Madrid, and the name of the candidate and his willingness to accept the crown were not to be revealed even to the Cortes till the time when they had to give their vote, so that Europe—and, above all, France—was to hear of the name only when the election was a *fait accompli*.

Now misfortune would have it that in a cipher telegram to the Spanish Government the date of Salazar's return home was misread, and the Cortes, already long exhausted by their labours, were adjourned. When Salazar arrived, this had already been done. The courts of Sigmaringen and of Berlin believed that the secret might be kept till the re-assembling of the Cortes. But this plan failed. General Prim convoked the Cortes for an extraordinary session for the 17th of July, expressly for the election of a King. He was anxious to have this over as soon as possible, and he thought, moreover, that by summoning the Cortes for the special purpose of this election, he rendered it more solemn and more honourable for the Prince. Moreover, it was considered difficult to guard such an important secret for months, and he held that France's reticence so far entitled him to assume that she would respect the will of sovereign, proud Spain.



DUC DE GRAMONT.

Moreover, this would have been the case but for three circumstances working in the opposite direction. These were: that Gramont was now the Foreign Secretary, that the French Parliament was just then sitting, and lastly the great heat of the weather, a factor which ever since the Great Revolution has exercised a

baleful effect on French politics. Owing to the vociferous squabbles of parties and to the ever increasing subterranean intrigues, the influence of Ollivier had been steadily undermined. In the month of May the then French ambassador in Vienna, the Duc de Gramont, had been recalled and intrusted with the portfolio of Foreign Affairs. He was an ambitious man of title, whom Bismarck's laurels filled with envious unrest, and, withal, he was a man of limited powers, hasty, violent and animated by a furious hatred of Prussia. In this latter respect he was heartily supported by Le Boeuf, the Minister of War.

When Prim had agreed with the President of the Cortes to convoke the House for the purpose of the election, secrecy was no longer possible.

He therefore summoned the French ambassador and submitted the matter to him. To his amazement he was told that the Spanish Government could not have taken a more dangerous step. To place a Prussian prince on the throne of Spain would be regarded by the national sentiment of France as an open challenge, to

which Napoleon could not remain indifferent. The ambassador had for some time noticed how Bismarck strove to intrude himself into Spanish affairs. The following morning the ambassador first sent a short telegram and then a detailed report to Paris. The event shewed that this was applying a match to a powder-magazine. On the 3rd July the "Agence Havas" published the first communication about the occurrences in Spain. Already on the 4th the "Constitutionnel" informed the public that the Prince had accepted the crown, and that it was amazing to see the sceptre of Charles V in the hands of a Prussian prince. This was the view France took of it, and to that view she adhered, although the Hohenzollerns of South Germany could claim kinship with many another family quite as well as with the Royal house of Prussia. As of old, France had dreaded to be wedged in east and west by the Hapsburgs, so now she dreaded to be so treated by the Hohenzollerns. That was going too far! Forthwith political passion was in a blaze. Gramont, who had hitherto allowed affairs to take their own course, now abandoned himself to his excited passions.

Immediately on July 4th the French Chargé d'Affaires presented himself in the Foreign Office of Berlin to give expression to the pained feelings of France. He was told that the question did not concern Prussia, but only Spain and the collateral line of the Hohenzollerns.

It might have been expected that Gramont would now bring the matter to the notice of the Spanish Government. But this would only have annoyed Spain, and not humbled Prussia. He therefore declared that he would respect the will of Spain, and set to work in Prussia to hinder its fulfilment.

That was shrewd enough, for it appeared just, and public opinion was in favour of it; in the first instance that of the greater part of Europe, which disliked the Germano-Spanish intimacy, and further that of even some Germans, inasmuch as Spanish affairs were matters of indifference to them and they certainly had no wish to be put to any trouble on account of them. Gramont intended to utilise the excitement in France as his ally and as his great engine for exercising pressure, and therefore it had to be artificially worked up to a high pitch. Bismarck's malignity must wreck itself against the imperious will of the "Grande Nation". Considering King William's love of peace and the small desire of the Prince for the Spanish crown, Gramont's task was easy enough; all he had to do, was to act with wisdom.

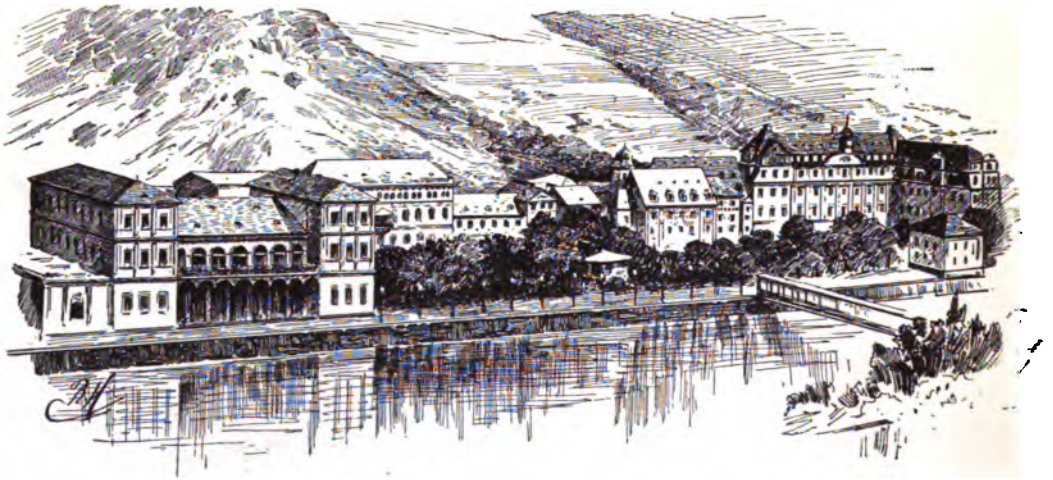
Napoleon, broken by his painful malady, was ill at ease. He knew what a successful war signified for his dynasty, and held that the pretext for it was of no importance. It was necessary to remember the ill will exhibited by Prussia ever since 1866,



COUNT BENEDETTI.

and that from that date his government had incessantly been censured for sacrificing the interests of France to the foreigner and for compromising her prestige. Such a state of things could not be allowed to continue. But who could tell what consequences a war might entail—especially upon him, the sick man?

He therefore wished that France should act with all dignity, remain courteous in all externals, and that no danger should be incurred. To this programme Gramont did not adhere. On the 6th of July he made a speech in the House, which concluded with what was very like a threat of war.¹ Indescribable, stormy applause rewarded the orator. In vain did Ollivier endeavour to tone it down by the declaration that Government wished for peace, wished for it ardently, but not for peace without honour. The cry of alarm passed from the Chambers into the streets; it ran through the papers like wild-fire, like a hurricane which whirled the minister in its vortex further



THE PARK, EMS.

and further out of his path. At last the long desired war of revenge was at hand! The "Gaulois" wrote: "To-day is our honour saved! If peace can be maintained—well and good; if it comes to war—all the better." The "Constitutionnel" said: "If Prussia refuses to fight, we will punch her in the back with the butt-ends of our guns, force her to cross the Rhine and set the left bank free." Cassagnac triumphed in his paper the "Pays", saying: "The Caudine Forks are ready for Prussia." On the 8th of July the "Moniteur" declared: "The question must now be enlarged; the least that can to-day satisfy us, is the abandonment by Prussia of all her military influence south of the River Maine."

One asks in wonder what had all this to do with the succession to the throne of Spain! The avenging furies had been aroused and Gramont had become their fugleman. But not having before him a clear conception of the goal for which he was making, not being confident in the justice of his cause, he was, as a matter of fact, not leading, but being led.

¹ His actual words were, "We do not believe that respect for the rights of a neighbouring people requires us to permit a foreign Power to place one of her princes on the throne of Charles V. This will not happen; we are sure of it. . . . Should it turn out differently, then we shall . . . do our duty without hesitation or weakness." [*Trs.*]

Count Benedetti was instructed to betake himself to Ems forthwith. There he was to deal with the King directly, and to obtain from him the declaration that Prussia disapproved of the candidature of the Prince and commanded him to abandon it. This could not possibly be demanded so bluntly from the victor of Königgrätz. The ambassador therefore endeavoured to gain his end step by step. It was, to begin with, very unusual that the representative of a foreign Power should go in search of the King at the baths and there treat with him about important political affairs; the usual approach was through the Foreign Office in Berlin. But King William, instead of simply referring the ambassador to the office, as he might well have done, forbore and received him kindly.

In determining to act thus the King no doubt felt that the affair had taken a disagreeable turn, and his sense of fairness led him to meet the French half way; moreover, the fact that the negotiations were carried on in Ems gave them a character of privacy in harmony with the nature of the whole question. As early as the 6th of July he had written to Prince Karl Anton, that he did not understand why General Prim had made any communication to the French ambassador, even before the matter had been submitted to the Cortes; that it was possible that the French excitement might yet calm down, and that it was to be regretted that the Prince's original suggestion to secure the assent of France, had not been adopted.

When now Benedetti most courteously requested the King that he would advise the Prince to withdraw from his candidature, the King replied that the matter did not concern him in his capacity as King, but only as a member of the Hohenzollern family, that he himself had already put himself in communication with Sigmaringen (July 9th). New telegrams crowded in upon the ambassador, to the effect that the mere renunciation of the Prince was of minor importance, but that it must be caused by the King, and that—quickly, quickly. Urged by Benedetti the King on the 11th of July granted a second audience. At this, however, he reiterated his former statement. On the ambassador pressing his view too warmly, the King, losing patience, said that his importunity might lead to the belief that France desired war, and that he was well acquainted with the preparations that were being made in Paris. If time were given him, peace would be preserved.

As a matter of fact the King had already sent a confidential messenger to the Prince, to shew him the present state of affairs and the correspondence that had taken place. Moreover, he added in a letter to the Prince, that France evidently desired war, and that if the Prince should determine on the withdrawal of his son, he, the King, would agree to it, as he had previously agreed to the acceptance.

At pretty nearly the same time the Roumanian Chargé d'Affaires in Paris arrived in Sigmaringen at the request of the Spanish ambassador in France, to describe the



MARSHAL LE BOEUF.

disposition and views of France and urgently to advise the withdrawal of the Prince. Prince Karl Anton was in a most painful position; his son the hereditary prince was on a pedestrian tour in the mountains, wholly ignorant of the commotion that had arisen. But he had to act promptly in order to deprive the French of all pretext for war. Accordingly he instantly resolved on his son's renunciation, and on the 12th of July he notified it to Prim in Madrid as well as the Spanish ambassador in Paris.

The world at large now thought that the matter was at an end. When Ollivier received the news, he hastened into the House, and exclaimed: "We have conquered; our wishes have been complied with! This is peace, which will now remain assured!" But tumult arose; some shouted that the ministers were miserable cowards and that France was dishonoured! Gramont thought the same, and he had the war-party with him. On the very same evening he wired to Benedetti: "We have received from the Spanish ambassador the renunciation handed in by Prince Anton in the name of his son, but we cannot regard it as adequate. To have its full effect, it is indispensable that the King of Prussia should join with it the assurance that he will not again at any future time approve of this candidature. The excitement here is enormous."

This telegram was the turning-point. Had Gramont been satisfied with what he had gained, he would have secured an undoubted diplomatic victory, which might have been largely puffed up in the papers. In view of the wrath of France a Hohenzollern had renounced a candidature to which he had secured the consent of the King; the Spanish crown would not fall into the hands of a "Prussien;" all danger for France had vanished. Gramont's preconceived opinion, that the whole affair was an intrigue of Bismarck's, which had to be permanently rendered impossible, his impetuosity, and still more the "popular voice" urged him beyond bounds. In graphic words he said to the English ambassador: "Public opinion is so over-excited that the Cabinet would possibly be turned out to-morrow, if it declared the question closed." He yielded to the impetuous onset of public opinion all the more readily because he thought that, having already gained so much, he would gain a little more, and this "more" was just what he needed for himself and Napoleon's throne. He was destined speedily to learn that his calculation was false; for he now lost the moral support of his demands and with it all firm foundation. This "more" meant the humiliation of Prussia, precisely what King William would not accept. Therefore Gramont had to choose between ruin and war, for Paris was like a volcanic crater, where glowing lava seethed and boiled.

On the morning of the 13th of July Benedetti planned his walk so as to meet the King in the park at Ems. He stood still with a courteous salute. The King offered him his hand, and thereupon he joined the King in his walk. The conversation at once turned on the question of the Spanish throne. The King said in friendly tones that the Prince had renounced it and that all the ambassador's anxieties were passed. Nothing was now left to Benedetti, but to put forward his new claim and to become importunate. The Ruler of Prussia answered indignantly: "It was impossible to go so far; once for all he refused to listen to such a demand!" Thereupon he beckoned to his adjutant, turned his back upon the ambassador, and went his way. *Jacta est alea; the die was cast.*¹

¹ See Translator's note at end of this chapter (p. 34).

Bismarck, full of anxiety, had travelled to Berlin, and awaited the issue, which seemed to be turning, without any fault of his own, to the disadvantage of Prussia. Then occurred the revulsion. At a glance his keen eye detected Gramont's diplomatic blunder, and he was not the man to miss taking advantage of it to the utmost. The rôles were changed; it was Prussia's turn to play the offended party and to demand satisfaction. He no longer spared French susceptibilities; on the contrary, his counter-stroke rang incisively; the diplomatic defeat of France was publicly proclaimed to the world. This was done by means of a skilful, concise telegram, relating the occurrences in Ems, despatched to all Prussian representatives abroad with stormy speed. The press circulated it.

There can be no doubt that it was mainly Bismarck's action which stimulated the enthusiasm of all Germany and which roused even the most self-satisfied Philistine



THE ROYAL PALACE, BERLIN.

out of his political apathy; and that diplomacy and the press skilfully playing into each other's hands, made Frenchmen, already excited beyond bounds, lose all self-control. The events in Ems were speedily described in all detail. The whole nation was made to feel indignant at the arrogance of Germany's hereditary foe shown to the aged ruler, at the time, when he was peaceably undergoing a cure at the baths. The streets of Berlin were now as much ablaze with popular passion as those of Paris had already been for some time. Thundering cheers for King William resounded on all sides and were passed on to the River Maine and to the Alps. With a steady eye and a firm hand the pilot of Prussian policy stood at the wheel, whilst the French vessel of state was tossed by fiercely lashed waves. Bismarck did not dread the war, he went resolutely to meet it; Gramont had evoked the war, and now when it raised its gory head he shrank back—and his Emperor, why he had never wished for the

rupture! Not so the war-party, nor the Empress. With feminine passion she is reported to have said to her husband: "Your throne is tumbling into the mud!" She was firmly convinced that her son would never ascend the throne, unless hated Prussia were first overthrown. And the rabble in the streets shouted "War! War!" Clenched fists were shaken at the ministers.

At a stormy Cabinet Council held at night under the presidency of the Emperor, the mobilisation of the army was decided upon. The repulse of Benedetti and the publication of the telegrams worked with double effect. It was an insult to the national honour of France, at least it was felt as such, and France could not endure



KING JOHN OF SAXONY.

that. On the following day, July 15th, the war decrees were laid before the Chamber and the Senate. Passion and impetuosity ruled both the assemblies. Ollivier's and Gramont's speeches were greeted with frantic applause. Nevertheless a few men of the Left ventured to offer opposition; foremost among them the aged¹ Thiers. He cried: "More than any one else do I wish satisfaction for 1866, but the opportunity you have selected I find detestable. After the honour of France had received ample satisfaction, you begin a quarrel about words. Not for any vital interest of France! No! Because of the blunders of the Cabinet we are at war." Gramont in reply declared that Prussia's conduct was an indignity offered to France. If there should be

¹ He was 73 years old, the same age as King William. [*Trs.*]

found a parliament to endure it, he said, he would not remain minister for five minutes. That settled the matter. A committee was easily persuaded by Gramont's coloured and incomplete narrative of events. When Léon Gambetta insisted on knowing the exact words of Bismarck's offensive telegram, Ollivier asked what concern the House could have with despatches and official protocols. "Give your votes," he cried, "and act; talking is mere waste of time." The hatred of Prussia carried everything before it. Ollivier and Le Boeuf assured the Houses that there was nothing to be feared, that France was fully prepared,¹ and had a start of eight to ten days over the enemy. War then! The Government demand for a preliminary credit of fifty million francs was granted by 245 votes against 8 votes, and on the 18th and 19th 500 millions more were granted for the war and the navy.

The Senate and the Chamber sent deputations to the Emperor, and pompously demanded war. What could the man do, stricken as he was with disease? He answered: "A war is legitimate, if it is waged with the approval of the country and the assent of its representatives." Privately he wrote: "I have not desired this war, but have been forced into it by public opinion." In truth, France, the large majority of the country, was peaceably disposed, but all in vain; Paris willed otherwise. The excitement of the capital increased apace. The press published fulminating articles; the Marseillaise once more came into vogue, once more inflamed popular passions. Regiments coming and going raised the temper to fever-heat. Soldiers cried that there was nothing sweeter than to die for the country. The highest hopes were entertained. Every evening bands surged, yelling, through the boulevards, crying: "Down with Bismarck! To the Rhine! to the Rhine! To Berlin!" And only feebly was heard the occasional cry from foot-passengers: 'Long live peace!' The police took part with those who demonstrated in favour of war. Before the door of the Prussian embassy appeared bands of many hundreds. They beat against the doors, howled, hooted and screamed: "Down with Prussia! War with Prussia! War!" The press joined in with similar cries, lied, and calumniated. But more and more there were heard sounds of grating discord. The "Réveil" addressed the Emperor in these words: "You will be in war, what you always have been in peace: a gambler, and nothing but a gambler; you cry 'va banque', because it is France that will have to pay the cost. But remember well, you must conquer, if France is to pardon you. Should the fortune of war be unfavourable to you, it will be the turn of the democracy to save the honour of the country."

All sorts of underhand intrigues and interests were at work, and not the least of these were speculations on change. Unbridled speculation flourished in the swayings hither and thither of passion, in the ups and downs of war news. On the 12th of July 200 carriages waited outside the Chamber, filled with people who had come from the Bourse to learn whether there was to be Peace or War, *i.e.* Bulling or Bearing, Rise or Fall. Quotations fluctuated with maddening rapidity. The Bourse was busy in parliament as in the press, and traded in patriotism.

On the 17th of July France issued her Declaration of War, and forwarded it without delay. It was, as if they felt, that they could not be sufficiently expeditious.

Meanwhile the excitement had increased in Germany also. The journey of the

¹ "Jusqu'au dernier bouton des guêtres." [*Trs.*]

King from Ems to Berlin resembled a triumphal progress. Amidst stormy acclamations he departed from Ems; at every station dense multitudes awaited and acclaimed him; at the terminus in Berlin an immense multitude greeted him with cheers and song, and in front of the Royal palace the masses surged to and fro. Repeatedly the King appeared on the balcony, and the people greeted him with bared heads. In the famous street, "Unter den Linden," an address to the King, signed by many thousands, ran as follows: "In these days of danger the people are impelled to ex-

press to your Royal majesty their unshaken fidelity and their universal enthusiastic support in this war. At such a time only one motto is on the lips of all: 'With God for king and country!' Hurrah! and at them!" If France *seemed* at one with her ruler, Prussia was so in reality. The telegrams from Paris left no doubt that war was inevitable. In the night between the 15th and 16th of July a council of war was held and mobilisation decreed. Forthwith the orders flew in every direction, and the princes of South Germany received corresponding despatches. The Crown Prince of Saxony put himself at the head of his own troops, and at his side was his brother, Prince George.

The effect of the summons on the army was enormous. At last they had an unmistakably genuine war against the hereditary foe, who without cause had broken the repose of peace. The feeling that war was forced upon them, that house and home, wife and child must

be defended made the passion of the Germans far fuller and deeper than that of the French. From millions of throats resounded the song:

Be calm and restful, fatherland mine,
Firm and faithful stands the Watch on Rhine.

Now as always, in the moment of danger and distress the good qualities of the German character asserted themselves, all petty squabbles of the day vanished at the thought of danger to the great, the common fatherland. It is true that there were some dissenters from the national feeling, in Saxony, in Hanover, in the Hanseatic towns and, above all, in South Germany; but they were swept away as chaff before the wind. Ever more heroically stood forth in those days the man who marshalled the nation for combat, the spokesman of all Germany: Count Bismarck. In foreign countries he either ranged public opinion on the side of Prussia, or at least checked all manifestations of hostility; in Germany he directed into one focus all forces and resources,



IRON CROSSES (Great Cross, Cross I, Class II, and for non-combatants, military tokens of honour).

material and spiritual. He became the voice of the national will, drawing along the gay, the indifferent, the reluctant, all of every class he carried with him in rare unanimity.

On the 19th of July, the anniversary of the death of Queen Louise,^{*} the Declaration of War by France was delivered; the only official communication France made to the Prussian Government throughout the whole business. On the same day the North German Diet was opened by the King in a speech full of dignity and trust, with the words: "In this just war, which has been forced upon us, God will aid



GROSS-HERZOG FRIEDRICH VON BADEN.

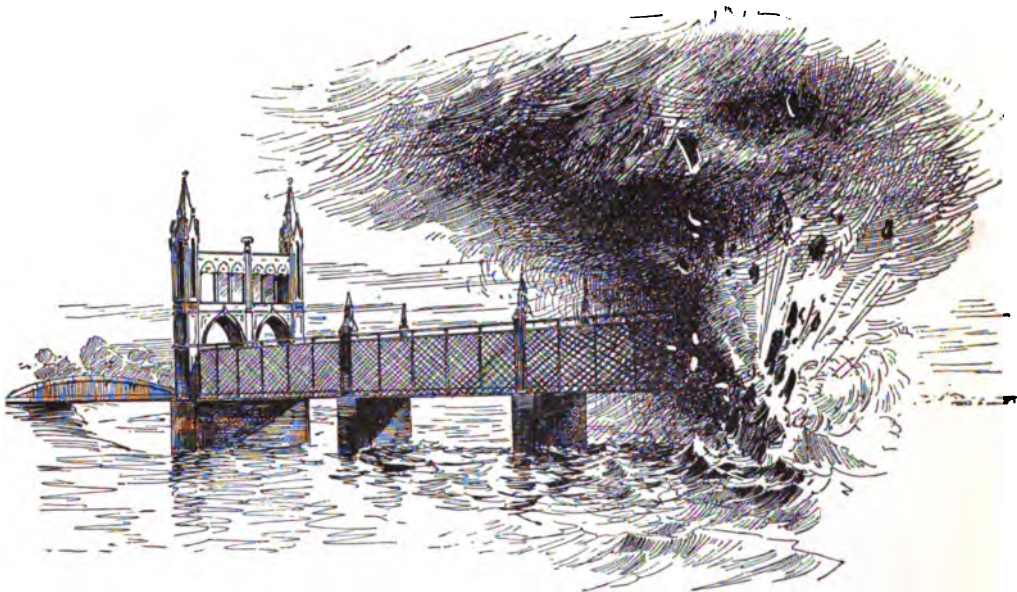
us, as he aided our fathers." The Reichstag was in full sympathy with the people. With loud exultation it received the news of the declaration of war, issued an address of devotion to the King and granted unanimously the demanded credit of 120 million

^{*} Queen Louise, King William's mother, was the adored heroic sufferer during the disastrous wars with the First Napoleon. She was fated to witness the downfall of her country and the humiliation of her Royal house, and had to endure the personal arrogance of the Corsican. Goethe writes of her: "Habent sua fata libelli;" and quoting his own lines "Who never ate his bread in sorrow, Who never wept through sleepless hours, Watchful for the morrow, He knows you not, ye Heavenly Powers," he says: "These heartbroken lines an adored, a very perfect queen used to repeat to herself during her cruel banishment from home when she was in exile and in boundless misery. She made friends with the book that contains these words, and speaks of other bitter lessons 'learnt' from it, as a sorrowful solace." In the War of Liberation, which she did not live to see, the memory of her and her name inspired the hearts of thousands of German combatants. [*Trs.*]

Thalers (£18,000,000); the Social Democrats alone abstained from voting. By the 21st the Reichstag was prorogued by President Simson with the words: "May God's blessing in this holy war rest upon our people!"

On that memorable 19th of July the King, accompanied by his son, the Crown Prince, visited the tomb of his parents. They both tarried long, lost in thoughts and memories of the past and of Queen Louise who had died in her sorrow. "They prayed with stricken hearts." On coming out of the chapel the Crown Prince said to his father, that a contest begun under such auspices must have a successful issue.

On the same day, the King, face to face with the solemn situation of the country, and gratefully mindful of the heroic deeds of the War of Liberation, revived in its full significance the Order of the Iron Cross. On the same day the Bavarian parliament



DESTRUCTION OF THE BRIDGE OVER THE RHINE AT KEHL.

arrived at a decision, which expanded the war of North Germany into a war of All Germany. ¹

The attitude of Baden had far-reaching influence in South Germany. Baden, thanks to her near proximity to France, had been educated in patriotic feeling by its excellent and highly cultured prince, and had long wished to join the North German Confederation. The Grand Duke was so fully at one with his subjects, that he did not even need to consult his parliament. On the 16th of July he ordered the mobilisation of the army, as Prussia had done. The bridge across the Rhine at Kehl was blown up, so as to sever the last link that united Baden with France.

¹ English readers may be reminded that this was in fact the first time that France had had to fight United Germany. In all her previous contests she always had German allies and there were German Neutrals. Ever since the days of Arminius the Latin races had profited by Teutonic disunion. [77s.]

In Bavaria the youthful King and his ministers were patriotic and German in all their sympathies. He also promptly mobilised his army on the 16th. This was primarily a military measure. The Bavarian people, especially the inhabitants of the Capital (Münich), were wholly at one with the King; not so the parliament, with its clerical and particularist majority.

Never before had the walls of the Bavarian Chamber witnessed a more excited sitting than that of the 19th of July. The Government had demanded an extraordinary military credit of 26 million florins (£2,600,000). The reporter of the Budget Committee



LOUIS II OF BAVARIA.

refused it, and demanded an armed neutrality. He was resolutely opposed by the Premier and by the War-minister von Pranckh. Deputy Sepp exclaimed: "The Bavarians were absent from the Battle of Leipzig,¹ but in this new national struggle we mean to be present." The opposition was tenacious, but the patriotic party, cheered by applause from the galleries, irresistibly gained the upper hand. At last the Premier was able to wire to Berlin, that Bavaria was ready to join in the war

¹ Fought 16, 17, 18 Oct. 1813, when Napoleon suffered his most disastrous defeat, and Germany was freed for ever from the galling French yoke. [*Trs.*]

as Prussia's ¹ ally. King Louis was greeted with storms of applause by his people in front of his castle and in the theatre. Six Bavarian princes joined the army.

Württemberg could no longer possibly hang back. The Government and the democratic majority in the Chamber would have preferred to remain neutral, but they were not now free to act. Impelled by the patriotic passion of the people and by the stormy march of events, the necessary supplies were voted, and preparation for war was made.

The Crown Prince of Prussia on the 16th of July entered in his diary: "Three armies are to be formed. I am to take command of the South Germans and have the hardest task; for I am to combat a valorous foe, with troops who love us little and have by no means been trained in our school." Characteristic enough of the views then entertained at the Prussian Court! Yet only two days later the announcement

went forth—"Universal enthusiasm! Germany rises as one man and will establish her Unity!" The sense of common danger welded together the component parts of the country, and the electric flash of anticipated War and Victory purged the iron of its dross.

Upon Bismarck's advice the Crown Prince announced as early as the 20th of July his departure on a visit to the South-German courts. No fitter man could have been found than the hero of Königgrätz, that stately, sunny being, whose charm and loveliness speedily won all hearts. Indescribable joy circled round him at Munich. In Stuttgart, whence the French ambassador had departed only the previous day, and where the Royal house was related to the Napoleons, the King accepted as commands the instructions of the Commander-in-Chief, the Crown Prince; but the manifestations



VON FRANCKH, WAR-MINISTER OF BAVARIA.

by the citizens of their fervid loyalty to the national cause and of popular favour towards the Crown Prince himself almost embarrassed him. From Stuttgart he went via Karlsruhe to Spires, where he inspected the first Bavarian bivouac.

On all sides there were formed charitable associations; unions to tend the sick and the wounded, to provide food and clothing for the suffering families, whose bread-winners had been called to the war. On the 17th of July Prince Charles in his capacity of Grand Master of the Knights of St. John, issued his summons: "War is inevitable, and we, united by the White Cross of the Hospitallers into a community bound to works of Christian charity towards friend and foe, are called upon as in

¹ To fully appreciate the fervour of Bavarian patriotism it must be remembered that, only four years previously, Prussia had inflicted severe defeats on Bavaria and her South German allies. [*Trs.*]

the wars of 1864 and 1866, to discharge to the utmost of our power our duties towards the sick and wounded." Accordingly all the Knights of St. John ready for duty were summoned to dedicate their personal service to that object, and others to render all possible assistance. "Let us pray to God, who rules the fates of nations, that he may bless our fatherland and strengthen us to fulfil the duties of our order faithfully to the end!" In the midst of all this anxiety and expectation came the 27th of July, a day of Universal prayer. Vast multitudes streamed to the churches and listened in devotion to the touching, heart-stirring words of their pastors. As in 1813, so now was seen the earnest, God-fearing character of the Germans.

The near future loomed gloomy and cloud-laden, not only for Germans, but quite as much for other nations, whose action was as yet undetermined. France entertained high hopes; Russia was pre-eminently important, but with wise foresight and skill Bismarck had favoured her schemes in the East. The Emperor Alexander II lived on terms of close friendship with his uncle King William, and did not wish to see France aggrandised. Accordingly Russia remained neutral and kept Austria and Denmark in check. In the latter country the old hatred of Germany blazed up fiercely. Had not the moment perchance come for the recovery of Schleswig-Holstein? The dread of Prussian arms, the influence of Russia and of England and the calm mind of the Danish King determined the question in favour of peace. Still more heavily was the pressure of Russia felt in Austria. Russia had declared that she would regard a breach of neutrality by Austria as a *casus belli*. As a consequence of previous negotiation, Napoleon believed himself sure of an Offensive and Defensive alliance with Austria and Italy, and made proposals accordingly to these powers. At the "Hofburg" (Imperial Palace) in Vienna the humiliation of Prussia, revenge for Sadowa (Königgrätz) would have been very welcome, but circumstances did not seem favourable. These threatened war on two sides, obvious danger in Oriental questions and, in case of victory, hampering dependence on Paris. These considerations based on the condition of foreign affairs were enforced by difficulties at home; Magyars and German-Austrians¹ imperiously demanded peace; furthermore, the army was not ready and the state of the finances was distressing. In Italy much the same conditions prevailed. Financial distress, the disinclination of the people and the army for a war with Prussia, Italy's ally in 1866, and the protection given by France to the Pope kept the sword of the warlike King in its sheath. And when the news of the French defeats arrived, people in Vienna and in Florence were overjoyed that peace had been preserved; and strict neutrality became a principle. England remained from the first neutral, as is befitting prudent merchants, who like to pocket their gains out of the conflicts of others.² This commercial view of politics impelled the Cabinet of St. James to isolate the war and reduce it to a duel between the two Powers, thereby, however, thwarting France, who sought allies and endeavoured to extend the

¹ In the composite Empire of Austria, these two races make up half the population of the whole monarchy, and far more than half in wealth and political influence. [*Trs.*]

² This is not historical; the sympathy of England for Germany, who at first was believed to be the weaker combatant, was unmistakably shown by popular demonstrations and by much private enthusiasm; when subsequently France was overwhelmed by unparalleled misfortunes, a revulsion of feeling took place, for English instinct invariably sides with the weaker party. "*Victrix causa deis placet, victa Anglis.*" [*Trs.*]

area of hostilities. Spain was the only external ally on whom Prussia might have reckoned; it was on her account that Prussia had encountered danger, and it seemed an affair of honour for Spain to come to her assistance. But the fate of Prussia did not concern the Spaniards. Prince Leopold had declined their crown. The state and the army were disorganized, and the people were accustomed to submit to French influence.

Fate then had decreed that Germany and France should engage in single combat, and prove what power each could show in war. The world ¹ and the German people believed in the military superiority of France; the Emperor Napoleon was doubtful



CHARLES, KING OF WÜRTTEMBERG.

on the subject; Moltke and Roon knew that the reverse was the truth. ² It was soon to be seen who was right.

¹ See Translator's foot-note, page 31.

² Moltke and his relations spent the summer of 1870 on his estate in Creisau. The General enjoyed his peaceful repose, and nothing seemed to indicate that the severest task of his life, the leading of the German army against France, was near at hand. On the 15th of July he took a drive in an open carriage with his brother Adolf, his sister-in-law and their two daughters. He drove himself; his brother sat by him. Just as the carriage was about to pass a ford of the River Peile, a telegraph boy just about to cross a foot-bridge close by, called to him. The General checked the horses, reached out his hand, received the telegram, read it, put it silently in his pocket and continued his drive. Nothing in his behaviour betrayed the importance of the message he had received, beyond the fact that he sat there more taciturn than ever; once indeed it was seen that his thoughts were wandering, for the wheels struck somewhat hard against the

Before the guns announced their decision, the Prussian and French governments, engaged in a passionate war of the pen. Each party charged the other with breaking the peace. Then it became apparent how much more prudent and cautious Bismarck had been, how restless and greedy the desire of France for aggrandisement. Like the blows of a club resounded the Prussian revelations. The proposals made by France as to the left bank of the Rhine, of an alliance against Austria, of the annexation of Luxemburg and Belgium with Prussian co-operation in return for the permission to incorporate the South German States into the North German Confederation. England and Austria were struck with amazement, and the South Germans recognized that Prussia, not France, had been their real protector.

On the 23rd of July Napoleon published a manifesto wherein he accused Prussia of a desire for conquest, and laid stress on the forbearance of France. He said: "The glorious standard, which once more we unfurl against those who challenge us, is the same which has carried the civilising principles of our great revolution through all Europe; it symbolizes the same ideas and will inspire the same feelings of devotion." Very differently sounded the first address of July 22nd, sent out by King William to the German nation; he spoke of: "mutual confidence," of love for the common fatherland. And in his decree of July 31st he said: "My people know as well as I do, that breach of the peace and desire of war are in all honesty not chargeable against our side; but being challenged, we are resolved, like our fathers, in full reliance on God's help, to engage in the contest for the delivery of our country."

Although the French Minister of War had asserted that everything was ready, Napoleon delayed his departure; it was like a presentiment that he would never again set eyes on his brilliant halls. On the 23rd he entrusted his wife with the regency. Not till the 28th did he quit St. Cloud by the railway which circled round revolutionary Paris. Without shewing himself to his people, without bidding farewell to his capital he went to Metz. A few months after this, St. Cloud was a heap of smoking ruins—the bombs of his own capital had destroyed the Imperial palace.

Berlin offered a complete contrast. On the afternoon of the 31st of July, innumerable multitudes surged to and fro "Unter den Linden" and before the Royal palace. At half-past five the gates were opened, and the ordinary two-horsed open carriage came forth, bearing King William and Queen Augusta. Thundering hurrahs rang through the air all the way to the station, which had been decorated with flowers, garlands and standards, by a nation's love.

On a table entwined with ¹ oak-leaves, were written as a parting greeting, the simple words: "With God!" Deeply moved, the departing king shook hands right and left. Many eyes glistened with tears. Then he entered the train, keeping up for

kerbstone. When after about an hour they arrived at the house, the old man (he was 70 years of age) leapt out of the carriage and said to his brother, who followed him into the house: "It is a stupid business; I must go this very night to Berlin." Thereupon he retired to his study and did not make his appearance again till tea was served. Silently, but graciously as ever, he sat in the midst of this small circle of friends, when suddenly he rose, struck the table with his hand, and exclaimed: "Let them come; with or without South Germany, we are ready for them." Without another word he retired to his study till the hour of departure. "*Gesammelte Schriften und Denkwürdigkeiten des General-Feldmarschalls Grafen Helmuth v. Moltke*", Vol. I. pp. 233, 34. [*Trs.*]

¹ The Germans regard the oak as typical of their national characteristics. [*Trs.*]

a long time his greetings to his people, out of the window. He was accompanied by his paladins: Prince Frederick Charles, [†] Bismarck, Roon and Moltke.

He went forth into the war a king; he returned home—an Emperor.

[†] "The Red Prince." [*Trs.*]

Translator's note to page 22: The whole story of the final interview at Ems and of Bismarck's despatch requires to be corrected. Fresh light has been thrown upon it by the publication of Bismarck's memoirs.

Whilst this work was going through the press, Bismarck's *Gedanken und Erinnerungen* have been published. They contain a full account of the alteration of the famous Ems telegram. King William had been irresolute, owing to the Queen's influence upon him. She had entreated him to avoid a war with France, reminding him of Jena and Tilsit. He therefore gave way, and France scored the diplomatic victory described on p. 17. Bismarck, however, felt it keenly, and dreading that its effect on the South Germans might be disastrous, determined to evade all responsibility by prompt resignation. He thus records the incident which changed his purpose:

"Resolved to resign, in spite of the reproaches of Roon, I invited him and Moltke to dine with me *à trois* on the 13th, and at dinner I informed them of my views and intentions. Both were very downcast . . . During our discussions I was informed that a cipher telegram, signed and sent to me by Privy-Councillor Abeken, by order of the King, had arrived from Ems. Its text was as follows:

"His Majesty wrote to me: 'Count Benedetti watched for me on the promenade, and asked me with much importunity to telegraph immediately, that I bound myself for all future time, never again to give my consent in case the Hohenzollerns should resume their candidature. I declined somewhat sternly, saying that such engagements could not be contracted *à tout jamais*. I told him that I had of course as yet received no communication, and as he himself had earlier news from Paris and Madrid than I had, he must see that my government was on this occasion, as before, 'no party to the transaction.' Subsequently to this His Majesty received a letter from the Prince, and as the King had told Count Benedetti that he was expecting to hear from the Prince, he determined upon Count Eulenburg's and my own advice to decline receiving Benedetti again, but to send word to him by an aide-de-camp, that he had now received from the Prince confirmation of the news that Benedetti had received from Paris, and had no further communication to make. His Majesty leaves it to the discretion of your Excellency, whether this new demand of Benedetti and its refusal should be forthwith communicated to our ambassadors and published in the papers.'

"When I read this telegram to my two guests, they were so downcast that they refused to eat and drink. Examining the document again I saw the significance of the authority given me by the King to publish the refusal of Benedetti's new demand. I asked Moltke several questions, and amongst others about the extent of our readiness for war. He replied that, if war must come, we had nothing to gain by delay, and that a speedy commencement would be to our advantage." [Here follow two pages of arguments to prove that war was now inevitable.]

"Having this conviction, I made use of the Royal permission sent me by Abeken to publish the contents of the telegram, and shortened it in the presence of my two guests by mere excisions, without adding or altering a word. It now ran as follows:

"After the Royal government of Spain had informed the Imperial government of France, that the Hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern had withdrawn his candidature, the French ambassador in Ems made a further demand on the King; asking him for authority to wire to Paris that His Majesty had bound himself that in future he would never again give his consent, in case the Hohenzollerns should resume their candidature. His Majesty thereupon declined to receive the French ambassador again, and sent him word by one of the Aide-de-Camps on duty, that He had no further communication to make to him." When I read this contracted version to my two guests, Moltke said: 'This has a different ring; the first sounded like a parley, this is a bold reply to a challenge.' My two guests had now recovered their appetite and their good spirits."

This is an accurate, although condensed, account of the famous so-called falsification of the Ems telegram. It was not, as some people fancy, a French telegram that Bismarck had tampered with, but a message of his own King that he had condensed, and thus forced him out of his perilous irresolution. The fact that Moltke approved of Bismarck's action is sufficient to show that there was in it no trace of what was unscrupulous or dishonourable.

CHAPTER II

THE ARMIES AND WAR MATERIAL

By LIEUTENANT-GENERAL ALBERT VON BOGUSLAWSKI

CIRCUMSTANCES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GERMAN AND THE FRENCH NATIONS

BEFORE I begin to describe the two armies that faced each other in 1870, we must first cast a glance at the two nations, the French and the German.

The Great French Revolution had called into being a National Army, but France had not adopted Universal Military Service in its entirety, having very soon legalised substitutes. (Law of 7 Ventose, 1800.¹) Other large continental states made similar enactments; Prussia alone had, after the War of Liberation, founded the constitution of her army permanently on the obligation of Universal Military Service as proclaimed at the beginning of that war. This fact, together with others, has essentially affected the development of events in both countries.

That the French possess vigorous, warlike qualities, they proved under the *ancien régime* as well as in the times of the First Republic and of the First and Second Empires. But the excessive strain of the all but uninterrupted wars from 1792 till 1815, and especially during the last years of the reign of Napoleon I, had even then produced in the people a feeling of deep disgust with military service, and this disgust remained dominant in the years of peace after the downfall of the empire.

It by no means follows that Frenchmen's love of warlike glory, deeply interwoven as it is with French vanity, had disappeared. Quite the reverse! Only the majority of Frenchmen had no desire *themselves* to appear on the battle-field; this was considered to be the business of the officers, of the soldiers raised from the lower classes, and of the substitutes purchased for money by people of means.

The French, a people of ancient civilisation, whose manners, literature and language had for more than a century maintained a decided predominance in Europe, whose country was by its fertility and climate an inexhaustible source of profit and wealth, rapidly recovered from the wounds inflicted during the 23 years of the Republican-Napoleonic wars. Under the administrative system introduced by Napoleon, trade and commerce, agriculture and manufactures of all kinds expanded in a surprising manner. Prosperity grew visibly and extended down to the lower middle-classes and the rural population. Ease in the mode of living, and comfort in domestic arrangements were the fruits of assured incomes.

¹ The Republican Calendar was introduced on Oct. 6th, 1793, and abolished on Sept. 9th, 1805. The year consisted of twelve months: Vendémiaire, Brumaire, Frimaire in Autumn; Nivose, Pluviose, Ventose in Winter; Germinal, Floréal, Prairial in Spring; Messidor, Thermidor, Fructidor in Summer. [*Trs.*]

But at the same time there sprang up during the reign of Louis Philippe, the "roi bourgeois," and afterwards during the Second Republic and Second Empire, that unbridled love of gain, which strove to secure its ends, the acquisition of riches, by questionable speculations on Change, and often by fraudulent financial operations, such as had even then already a disintegrating effect on society. In connection with this was largely developed that love of luxury and of unbridled self-indulgence which celebrated its orgies under the Second Empire. The habit, which had prevailed previous to the Revolution, of not taking moral and religious obligations very seriously, returned with increased force and spread the corruption of manners far and wide among the people, principally no doubt in Paris and the other large cities. This made itself felt with dire effect on marriage, that foundation of all human society. To this state of things is ascribed the fact that already, under the Second Empire, the increase in the population of France was very slight, or had ceased altogether.

Literature, which in the first half of the Century, under the restoration of the Old Royal House, had burst out into beautiful blossom, became under the Second Empire mostly a mere record of the circumstances of modern Parisian society.

Added to this, on the one hand, the priests had, mainly by the aid of the Empress, acquired powerful influence, and were striving to make the government of France subservient to their own; on the other hand, the International Social Democracy, aiming at the overthrow of government and society, secretly sapped the ground on which the rule of Napoleon III was based, shook the belief in all divine and human authority and thus gradually subverted the mainstay of National Defence, Discipline; first among the People, and lastly in the Army.

The fortunate and frequently glorious campaigns of the Second Empire in the Crimea and in Italy failed to check the development of these tendencies. The victories flattered French vanity and love of conquest, but they were unable to evoke, along with the love of glory, a true military spirit, to which belief in authority, a sense of self-sacrifice and devotion are indispensable. As far as concerns the general state of culture, Taine and other writers have shown that the higher ranks were rendering notable service in the exact sciences, but that they were lacking in that larger education, that wider insight into the essence of things, which is developed in the German Universities, so that their knowledge of the affairs of other nations and countries was slight beyond belief. School attendance not being compulsory in France, Elementary Education was little spread among the people; a large part of the working classes could neither read nor write.

It is obvious that this state of the nation must react on the army, which, spite of the admission of substitutes, was still, with the exception of the native African troops and the foreign legion, recruited from the children of the soil. But nobody cared to look into these matters. The term "la Grande Nation" had not lost its magic power with Frenchmen, and the successes of other nations were always regarded with jealousy and envy.

* * *

If now we turn to Germany, our first attention must be given to that State which in 1870 undertook the lead.

Brandenburgh-Prussia had sprung from the sands, the swamps, the pine-clad

heaths of a borderland, which had to be conquered from Slavs in uninterrupted warfare. The rude climate, unlike that of France, and the sterility of a large part of the soil rendered the cultivation of the country difficult for its inhabitants as well as for its conquerors. In this region, the Mother-country of the Prussian Monarchy, a hardy race grew up, steeled by rough toil and constant battles. The same thing happened in the other borderlands, subsequently incorporated with the state of the Hohenzollerns, *i.e.* Prussia Proper, once belonging to the Teutonic order, and with Pommerania and partly also in Silesia.

The history of this state has been powerfully influenced by the principles of the Great Elector, of his grandson Frederick William I and of Frederick the Great; these were: Religious toleration;¹ thrifty and efficient administration; the fostering of warlike qualities by rearing up a numerous well-trained army, schooled to a sense of duty; good popular education; protection of the lower classes and subordination of the states to a rigorous central power.

In spite of the Voluntary Enlistment in the army, then in vogue, the Prussian Rulers succeeded in rousing and keeping alive in the people a Prussian Patriotism, thereby securing self-sacrifice and devotion to Prince and Country in the great struggles of the Elector Frederick William and of King Frederick II.

But after the death of the latter there came a period of nerveless effeminacy, of a misapprehension of the functions of citizen and of government; a time in which a false humanity and a shallow enlightenment had overgrown the Spartan spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice; then there occurred the catastrophe which, after storm, oppression and distress, led the government and the people back again to the right path.

After the defeat of 1806 the Prussian State rose again from its deepest fall with old Teutonic vigour. The great War of Liberation was crowned with success, and after victory was achieved Universal Military Service became the law of the country. But these wars and the oppression of seven years had inflicted wounds on the country very different from those suffered during the wars of the Republic and of the Empire by France, which is so richly endowed by nature. Just as it was after the Thirty Years' War, so now, there had come a time demanding the utmost thrift, simplicity and sobriety in public as well as in private life.

Deeply dissatisfied and disillusioned by the results of the War of Liberation, so far as concerned the regeneration of Germany and her internal affairs, a part of the nation turned its attention to arts and sciences, whilst another looked for healthful recovery to the introduction of liberal ideas, as parliamentarism embodied in the parliamentary system of France during the reign of Louis Philippe.

Amidst these conflicting tendencies it was *Universal Military Service* that kept alive among the masses in Prussia a sense of national unity, which fostered the ideas of unflinching devotion to duty, of obedience and self-abnegation.

Universal school-attendance, moreover, exercised in Prussia, as in many other German states, its educative influence on the masses, and the Universities maintained a lofty standard of German nationality.

Outside Prussia—in the rest of Germany—there was, of course, lacking the

¹ Frederick the Great said: "In my country every one can go to heaven by whatever road he pleases." [*Trs.*]

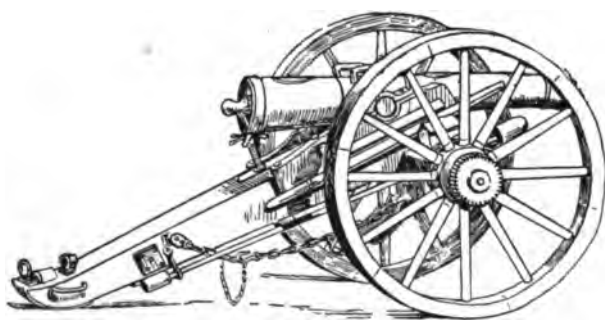
educative influence of Universal Military Service. But true Science and Culture had there also advanced with more and more rapid strides.

The feeling of corporate existence, of political consciousness had been developed by the constitutional participation of the people in the legislation of the country. The longing after the regeneration of Germany, the sense of National Unity, manifested itself there with perhaps greater strength even than in Prussia, because the evil effects of disunion were felt more keenly in the petty states than in the Great Power of North Germany.

The attempt at the unification of Germany in 1848—1850 had failed. The chasm between North and South Germany had grown wider—these very attempts at unification had made the differences between Austria and Prussia irreconcilable. As will always be the case in all vital national questions, arms had to decide; the decision was in favour of Prussia.

The Prussian Military System had brilliantly proved its efficiency on the field of battle. From the blood shed in the struggle between Germans and Germans sprang the tree of knowledge, that the leadership was rightly assumed by the stronger of the two Powers. With the introduction of the Prussian military system throughout the greater part of Germany, viz., in the newly formed North German Confederation, the influence of Universal Military Service began to be felt.

Summarizing all this, it may be said that, previous to 1870, the German people was swayed by impulses towards National Unity; that the corrupting influences which, as has already been shown, were felt in France, had as yet produced little effect in Germany; that the spirit of self-abnegation, order, discipline and faithful discharge of duty was a living force with Germans, and that when Gallic presumption and envy cast down the glove, the German people was morally superior to the French.



FRENCH FIELD-GUN (4 pounder).

THE FRENCH ARMY.

After the fall of Napoleon I the right of purchasing substitutes in the Army was re-affirmed by the law of 1818, and in the course of time the greatest abuses followed in its train. Napoleon III introduced in 1855 the law of purchasing immunity from military service from the state direct. The huge sums thus realised formed a separate fund for the enlistment of volunteers, and of soldiers who had already served their time, but were willing to remain in the army on condition of receiving higher pay.



Mounted Rifles. Artilleryman.
Garde Mobile. Infantry of the Line. Turko. Cuirassier. Dragoon.

FRENCH TROOPS.

Out of these there certainly was formed a body of "Troupiers," yielding veteran non-commissioned officers. It must be admitted too, that a portion of these substitutes (*ren-gagés*) were animated by attachment to the flag and by military spirit; still the majority of them regarded military service as a speculation, and aimed at acquiring a small capital from the bounties repeatedly earned.

Life in French barracks was not of a kind to keep the soldiers fully employed. The "Troupiers" had a great deal of their time on hand. Drunkenness, insolence towards the younger commissioned and non-commissioned officers largely prevailed in their ranks; active reciprocal relationship with the nation did not exist; there was

formed a rigorously closed military caste, which no doubt proved useful to the Second Empire in keeping down the Opposition. Many old soldiers being retained with the standards, there was of course less room for recruits, and accordingly a large part of the defensive forces of the country, and these the most educated and intelligent, remained unemployed.

A corps of officers educated on a uniform system, forming a close corporation among themselves, with a feeling of personal responsibility and a strongly pronounced sense of honour, such as Prussia has, did not exist in France. The French officers were appointed from two totally different ranks of society; viz., those who had worked their way upwards in the army and those who had received a scientific military training. The former had risen from the non-commissioned officers, had never passed any scientific examination whatever, and hardly ever attained a rank higher than that of captain; the latter consisted of students of the school of St. Cyr, and of such volunteers of the better classes as had entered the army with the view of becoming officers. The higher and the highest posts were filled more with an eye to personal and political than to military considerations.

No institution like the German "Landwehr" existed in France. The National Guards of the towns were neither by their constitution, nor by discipline or training; fitted for service in the field, in fact they were not intended for it.

The re-awakening of the Napoleonic idea, and the campaigns in Algiers, in the Crimea, in Italy, China and Mexico had established great self-confidence in the French Army. It considered itself beyond dispute the First Army of the world, and felt confident of easily giving a good account of any opponent. This pride, degenerating into arrogance, was one of the causes why military duties and drill in time of peace were neglected. "If we have to go into the field, we shall soon settle the business, and the rush ("élan") of the French soldier is irresistible"—this was their confession of faith.

The Zouave attacking with the sword-bayonet was represented as the type, the model of the French infantry-soldier, especially since Napoleon III had at the commencement of the campaign of 1859 in Italy, anew recommended to his infantry the attack with the bayonet, and had won despite the rifles of the Austrians. That this was due to the errors of the Austrian Generals was not mentioned, and "the soldier won the battle of Solferino" was accepted as the universal watchword. The French soldier was no doubt possessed by national sentiment and by warlike pride, but the incessant political changes in the forms of government had destroyed the once unshaken and inspiring attachment to the head of the state.

The threatening cloud that brooded over the army, induced by the persistent socialistic propaganda, had made its influence felt even in the Italian campaign of 1859, in the contemptuous shouts: "Les épaulettes en avant!" Moreover, the French officer contributed not a little to the slackening of the bonds of discipline by his indifference to the welfare of the soldier. The non-commissioned officers, however, who had mostly sprung from the best elements of the "troupiers," were possessed by a strong sense of honour and by a true military spirit. In all campaigns, as they did in 1870, they ventured blood and life and stepped into the breach made by the shortcomings of the French army-system. The same is true of the officers of higher rank, but even among them contempt for the scientific study of the art of war made itself manifest and was bitterly avenged in 1870.

The General Staff was recruited almost exclusively from the pupils of Saint Cyr. Its officers did not from time to time return to the line, as the German officers do, but remained for whole decades in the General Staff, without gaining practical experience by service with the troops.

The Emperor was the commander-in-chief, not, however, so directly as the King was in Prussia, but in such sense that the minister of war was looked upon as holding the immediate authority over the Army. The Emperor Napoleon III was a man of high scientific culture. In his political career he frequently exhibited resolution and force of character. Nor was he insignificant as a soldier. The Howitzer of his invention proved itself efficient in the Crimea. But he had never had consecutive military



Seine-et-Oise. Brittany. Montpellier. Normandy.

GARDE MOBILE.

training. His exercise of the command in Italy in 1859, though not distinguished, had none the less been crowned by success. In estimating the value of foreign armies he was superior to most of his Generals. But his health was broken, and his frequent political failures in the years preceding the war had shaken his self-reliance.

Marshal Le Boeuf, the chief of the General Staff at the outbreak of the war, was not the man to make good, even partially, the short-comings of the Emperor.

MacMahon and Bazaine were looked upon as the most approved commanders. The former was 62 years of age and of distinguished descent; he had received his schooling in Algiers; had had the chief command in the storming of the Malakoff in the Crimea, and in Italy his successful attack in the nick of time had decided the

victory of Magenta. MacMahon was much liked and highly esteemed. Bazaine was different in many respects. He was born in 1811 and had risen from the ranks; he had served in Africa and in Spain, commanded the First Regiment of the Foreign Legion, distinguished himself in the Crimea, and had held the chief command in Mexico. His character was not much trusted; he was taciturn and not popular.

The great Prussian successes of 1866, which far outshone the French feats of arms, created envy, dissatisfaction and anxieties of all kinds in France, and led to a kind of re-organisation, which was carried out by Marshal Niel, a very gifted man.

The military law of 1868 divided the military forces of France into four categories, the active army, the reserve, the garde mobile and the marine. The time of service



FRANCS-TIREURS.

was fixed at 5 years with the standards, and 4 years in the reserve. The old regulation, according to which a part of the year's contingent was required to remain with the standards only 5 months, and was then passed on to the reserve, was retained.

The Garde Mobile consisted of men that were fit for service, but had not been enrolled, and were to have only 15 days' drill in the year—accordingly this was for military purposes an entirely useless body, and when Marshal Niel died in 1869, his successor in the War-ministry, Marshal Le Boeuf, abolished it. The practice of purchasing substitutes for service in the line was retained. Marshal Niel's reorganisation was but a half-measure. The Empire did not possess the power to carry through, against

the will of the nation, a real reconstruction of the army on the basis of Universal Compulsory Service.¹

It will tend to a general understanding of the ultimate development of the national power of France, if I at once proceed to explain the organisation of the forces which were ultimately raised for the most part after the battle of Sedan. By ordinances of the "Government of National Defence," created after the fall of the Empire, obligation to military service was made universal. Substitutes were not allowed. In accordance with this principle the Garde Mobile of all France was called to arms. Besides these, picked men from the "Garde National Sédentaire," which had taken up arms over the whole country, were enrolled in battalions as the best available men for military service, and were employed in the field. A part of these mobilized National Guards joined the new armies in the field, another part remained in the



TURCOS.

departments to undertake the defence of their homes in conjunction with those National Guards that had not been mobilized.

These forces were generally designated as the Territorial Troops. Out of the fourth battalions, formed at the beginning of the war, and of the troops in the dépôts there were formed new regiments of the line,—named Marching Regiments, as under Napoleon I—these of course were very inferior to the old regiments of the line. Finally there also arose numerous Free-corps, called *Francs-tireurs*. They were instructed to carry on a guerilla warfare on the flanks and on the rear of the German armies and to coöperate in the defence of various localities. Very often this was carried out in a

¹ Instructive for all future time is the resistance offered by the Opposition, which maintained that Marshal Niel's reorganisation had already gone much too far. When Marshal Niel was reproached in the Corps Législatif for wishing to convert France into a great barrack, he replied: "Take care, gentlemen, that you do not turn her into a great cemetery."

manner not compatible with the law of nations, because the franc-tireur, who frequently wore no uniform, would throw away the gun he had just been using against the Germans, and meet our men pretending to be a harmless peasant. Finally there is yet to be mentioned the corps of Garibaldi, consisting of about 35,000 men, partly Italians.

The strength of the French Army amounted before the outbreak of the war in 1870, inclusive of the levies of 1869—which, however, would not be enrolled before the 1st of August—to 567,000 men. But from these had to be deducted 230,500 non-combatants, gens d'armes, garrisons at the dépôts in the interior and in Algiers, leaving 336,500 combatants available for the army in the field.

The method of mobilisation was most cumbrous and altogether different from our own. The arms, outfit and uniform of the reserves were not with the regiments as is the case with us, but were collected in large dépôts, at which the soldiers had to present themselves for their outfit. But as there was no organisation of railway transport prepared in times of peace, and the authorities at the dépôts had not even been sufficiently informed as to the places at which the reserves were to report themselves, congestion and blocks of all kinds soon developed themselves.

Neither Army Corps nor Divisions existed in France in time of peace. The officers in command of territorial districts had control over the regiments stationed from time to time in their respective districts, and these were frequently changed for political reasons. In Prussia, on the contrary, the principle was maintained that the regiments should as much as possible be retained in their own recruiting districts so as to be able to call in the reserves as quickly as possible.

Further, an independent administration for each of the larger Units did not exist in time of peace. The whole administration was centralized. Such a wise subdivision of labour, as in Prussia and most other German states was a matter of principle, did not exist at all.

In peace-time each of the three Arms of the French Army was administered separately. The army was not organised in tactical Units. The several parts of the army were:

I. THE IMPERIAL GUARDS:

Infantry: 3 regiments of Grenadiers, 4 Voltigeur regiments, each of three battalions, 1 regiment of Zouaves of two battalions, and 1 battalion of Chasseurs.

Cavalry: 1 regiment of Cuirassiers, 1 regiment of Carabiniers, 1 regiment of Lancers, 1 regiment of Dragoons, 1 regiment of Guides, 1 regiment of Chasseurs, each consisting of 4 field-squadrons.

Artillery: 1 regiment of Field Artillery, 1 Horse Artillery.

Total: 24 battalions, 24 squadrons and 72 guns.

Force on August 2nd, 1870: 21,949 men and 6,635 horses.

II. THE LINE:

Infantry: 100 regiments of Infantry, 20 battalions of Chasseurs, 3 regiments of Zouaves, 1 regiment of light Algerian Infantry, 3 regiments of Algerian Riflemen, * and

* Turkos and Zouaves were troops specially organized for service in Algiers. The former consisted of Negroes and Bedouines; the Zouaves mostly of old veterans with a dash of cosmopolitan mercenary soldiers of the type of the 17th century.

1 Foreign Legion. All these were regiments of 3 battalions. The battalion was formed of 8 companies, 2 of which remained in dépôt.

Cavalry: 10 regiments of Cuirassiers, 12 regiments of Dragoons, 8 regiments of Lancers, 12 regiments of Chasseurs, 8 regiments of Hussars, 4 regiments of African Chasseurs, and 3 regiments of Spahis, each of 4 squadrons.

Artillery: 15 regiments of Field Artillery each of 8 batteries,¹ and 4 regiments of Horse Artillery each of 8 batteries. Each battery had 6 guns.

Engineers: 3 regiments.

Total of the Army in the Field: 368 battalions, 252 squadrons, 984 guns and 3 regiments of engineers.

Of these there were detained on the Spanish frontier, in Civita Vecchia, and in Algiers 36 battalions, 40 squadrons and 60 guns.

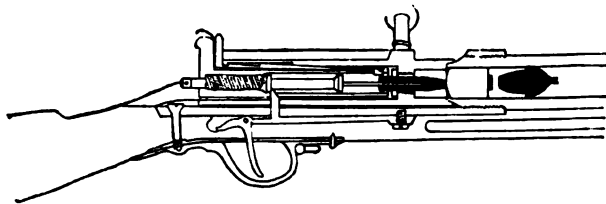
When war broke out 115 fourth battalions were formed, and the scheme for the Garde Mobile was calculated at 100 battalions and 10,000 artillerymen.

The arm of the infantry was the Chassepot rifle, for the time a most excellent weapon, which was far superior to the needle-gun for rapidity, flatness of trajectory, range and penetration.

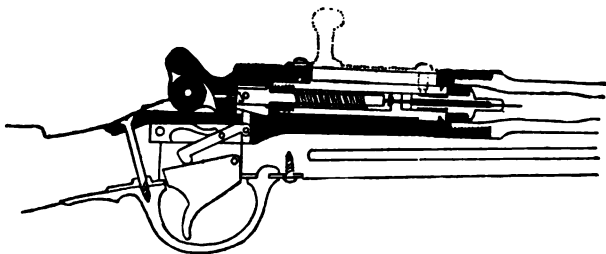
The infantry soldier carried 90 cartridges. Each two companies were provided with a two-wheeled ammunition-cart carrying 24 cartridges per man, and in the ammunition columns there were 40 additional cartridges per man.

On the other hand, the armament of the artillery was inferior to that of the Germans. It consisted of muzzle-loaders of 4 lbs. and 8 lbs. on the system of La Hitte.

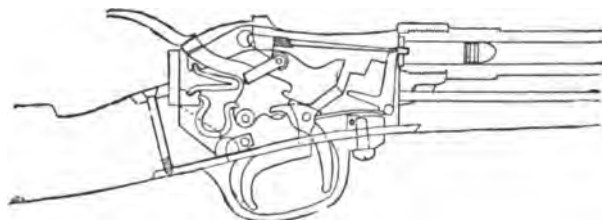
The range was good, but the accuracy of aim was very defective. Moreover, they had too many guns in proportion to the horses and men. The newly invented



NEEDLE-GUN.



CHASSEPOT.



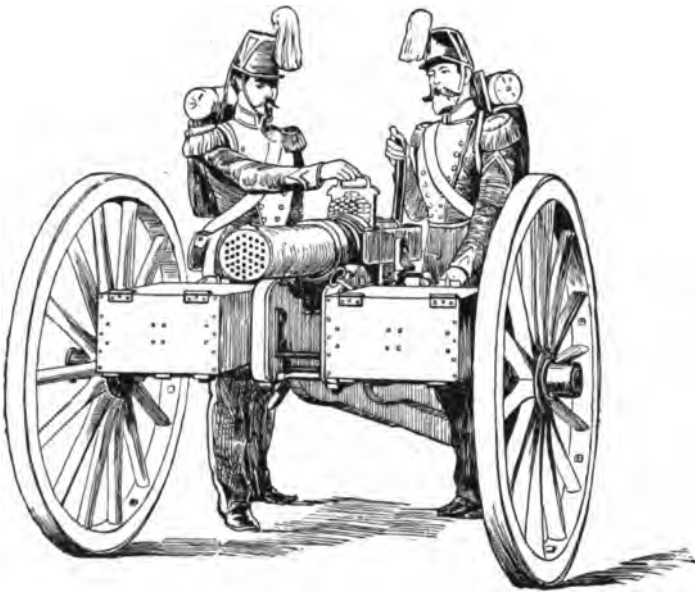
WERDER.

¹ Gen. Boguslawski says 12 batteries per regiment, apparently taking his figures from the Prussian Official History; but he has omitted to notice that of the 12 only 8 batteries went into the field. Apparently the 3rd R. is not included in the admirable elementary instruction to which he has referred, being no doubt ignored as a piece of vulgar English trading. At all events $72 + 15 \times 12 \times 6 + 4 \times 8 \times 6$ do not add up to 984, whereas $72 + 15 \times 8 \times 6 + 4 \times 8 \times 6 = 984$. [Trs.]

Mitrailleuses also, which discharged at each round 25 bullets, fell far short of what was expected of them.

The arms of the cavalry were not essentially different from those of the Germans, but the horses were not, on an average, equal in quality to the German horses.

The French infantry-soldiers enjoyed a high reputation as skirmishers. Down to 1859 they were praised for skill in utilising chance cover, for impetuous rush and for independent initiative. On the other hand it was known from of old that the French were more liable to panic than the Germans. The successes of the Prussian needle-gun in the war of 1866 had exercised a peculiar influence on the drill-regulations of the French. Those issued by Marshal Niel laid stress on defensive tactics.



CHARGING THE MONTIGNY MITRAILLEUSE.

The enemy should be allowed to rush on to the attack, be shattered by the Chassepots, and then at last the charge was to be made; a regulation, which was neither suited to the French temperament nor to be commended, except for troops very skilful in the use of their weapon.

The regulations of 1869 were to a large extent modelled upon those of Prussia, but in adopting them in the letter, they had failed to adopt their spirit. The practice of employing independent companies in the sense of the Prussian tactics of company-columns was never mentioned. And just in one of the most important points, skill in shooting, the French

could not be for a moment compared with the German troops. The instruction in shooting had been superficial and careless. Moreover, the French were taught to trust firing at long ranges—a practice of most doubtful utility even with troops of very firm discipline under fire, and in this the French were wholly deficient.

In one word: the regulations and the use of the weapons did not correspond with the character of the troops. The cavalry was inadequately trained to act as scouts, nor did they know how to manœuvre in large masses. The traditions handed down from the days of the Great Corsican had been lost. The attention devoted to their horses was inadequate.

The artillery—a favourite arm in France since the time of the Revolution—had not had sufficient fire-practice. The habit and training of acting in large masses—whereby Napoleon I had gained such marked successes—had fallen into disuse. From mere actual inferiority of the weapons they could in no way hold their own against the Germans. As for the peace-training of large bodies, there were at that

time in France no such field-manceuvres as those by which we maintained the war efficiency of our army. The French troops, when portions of the army were assembled in permanent camps, only executed movements in masses, such as were more a military spectacle than a warlike exercise.

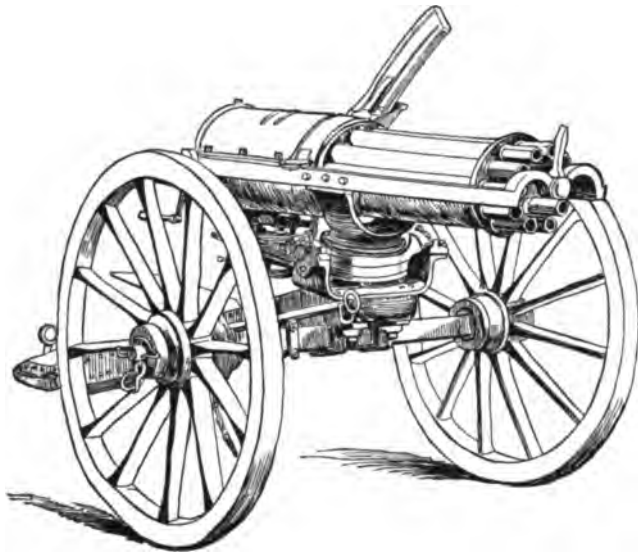
When war was declared fiery enthusiasm and confidence prevailed throughout the army. They misjudged the formidable foe whom they went to meet with the cry: À Berlin!

Napoleon had organized his forces not into independent Armies, but only in Corps, therein following the old Napoleonic tradition. The Corps were of different strengths, varying with the seniority of their respective commanders. They consisted of 2 to 4 divisions of infantry, one division of cavalry, with a reserve of artillery and of engineers.

The Division of Infantry consisted of 2 brigades, each of 2 regiments of infantry, 3 batteries, and one company of engineers. Some brigades of infantry had one battalion of chasseurs added to them. The strength of a battalion varied from 600 to 700 men.

The Division of Cavalry numbered 2 or 3 brigades each of 2 regiments; a squadron about 125 sabres: the reserve of artillery, 4 field batteries and 4 mounted batteries, but in some cases only 2 of the latter.

The distribution of the remaining troops is exhibited in the following "Ordre de Bataille."



GATLING MITRAILLEUSE.

* * *

Distribution (Ordre de Bataille) of the Army placed in the field in July 1870 for the war against Germany, and called Army of the Rhine.

Commander-in-Chief: The Emperor Napoleon III.—Chief of the Staff: Marshal Le Boeuf.—Sub-Chiefs: Generals Le Brun and Jarras.

Imperial Guard: General Bourbaki.—Chief of the Staff: General D'Auvergne.—1st Division: (Voltigeurs) General Deligny.—2nd Division: (Grenadiers) General Picard. Cavalry Division: General Desvaux.—Artillery Reserve: Colonel Clappier.—State of the Troops: 23 Infantry battalions, 1 Chasseur battalion, 24 squadrons, 60 guns, 12 mitrailleuses, and 2 companies of Engineers.

1st Army Corps: Marshal MacMahon, Duke of Magenta.—Chief of the Staff:

General Colson.—1st Division: General Ducrot.—2nd Division; General Abel Douay.—3rd Division: General Raoult.—4th Division: General de Lartigue.—Cavalry Division: General Duhesme.—Artillery Reserve: Colonel de Bassart.—State of the Troops: 48 Infantry battalions, 4 Chasseur battalions, 28 squadrons, 96 guns, 24 mitrailleuses, and 5½ companies of Engineers. [The 87th Regiment remained in Strassburg as garrison.]

IIInd Army Corps: General Frossard.—Chief of the Staff: General Saget.—1st Division: General Vergé.—2nd Division: General Bataille.—3rd Division: General de Laveaucoupet.—Cavalry Division: commanded by Brigade-General Valabrègue.—Artillery Reserve; Colonel Beaudouin.—State of the Troops: 36 Infantry battalions, 3 Chasseur battalions, 16 squadrons, 72 guns, 18 mitrailleuses, and 5 companies of Engineers.

IIIrd Army Corps: Marshal Bazaine.—Chief of the Staff: General Manèque.—1st Division: General Montaudon.—2nd Division: General de Castagny.—3rd Division: General Metman.—4th Division: General Decaen.—Cavalry Division: General Clérembault.—Artillery Reserve: Colonel Lajaille.—State of the Troops: 48 Infantry battalions, 4 Chasseur battalions, 28 squadrons, 96 guns, 24 mitrailleuses, and 5½ companies of Engineers.

IVth Army Corps: General de Ladmirault.—Chief of the Staff: General Osmont.—1st Division: General de Cissey.—2nd Division: General Grenier.—3rd Division: General Count Lorencez.—Cavalry Division: General Legrand.—Artillery Reserve: Colonel Soleille.—State of the Troops: 36 Infantry battalions, 3 Chasseur battalions, 16 squadrons, 72 guns, 18 mitrailleuses, and 4 companies of Engineers.

Vth Army Corps: General de Failly.—Chief of the Staff: General Besson.—1st Division: General Goze.—2nd Division: General de l'Abadié d'Aydein.—3rd Division: General Guyot de l'Espart.—Cavalry Division: General Brahaut.—Artillery Reserve: Colonel Fénélon.—State of the Troops: 36 Infantry battalions, 3 Chasseur battalions, 16 squadrons, 72 guns, 18 mitrailleuses, and 4 companies of Engineers.

VIth Army Corps: Marshal Canrobert.—Chief of the Staff: General Henry.—1st Division: General Tixier.—2nd Division: General Bisson.—3rd Division: General Lafont de Villiers.—4th Division: General Le Bassor Sorval.—Cavalry Division: General de Salignac-Fénélon.—Artillery Reserve: Colonel Despres.—State of the Troops: 48 Infantry battalions, 1 Chasseur battalion, 24 squadrons, 114 guns, 6 mitrailleuses, and 5 companies of Engineers.

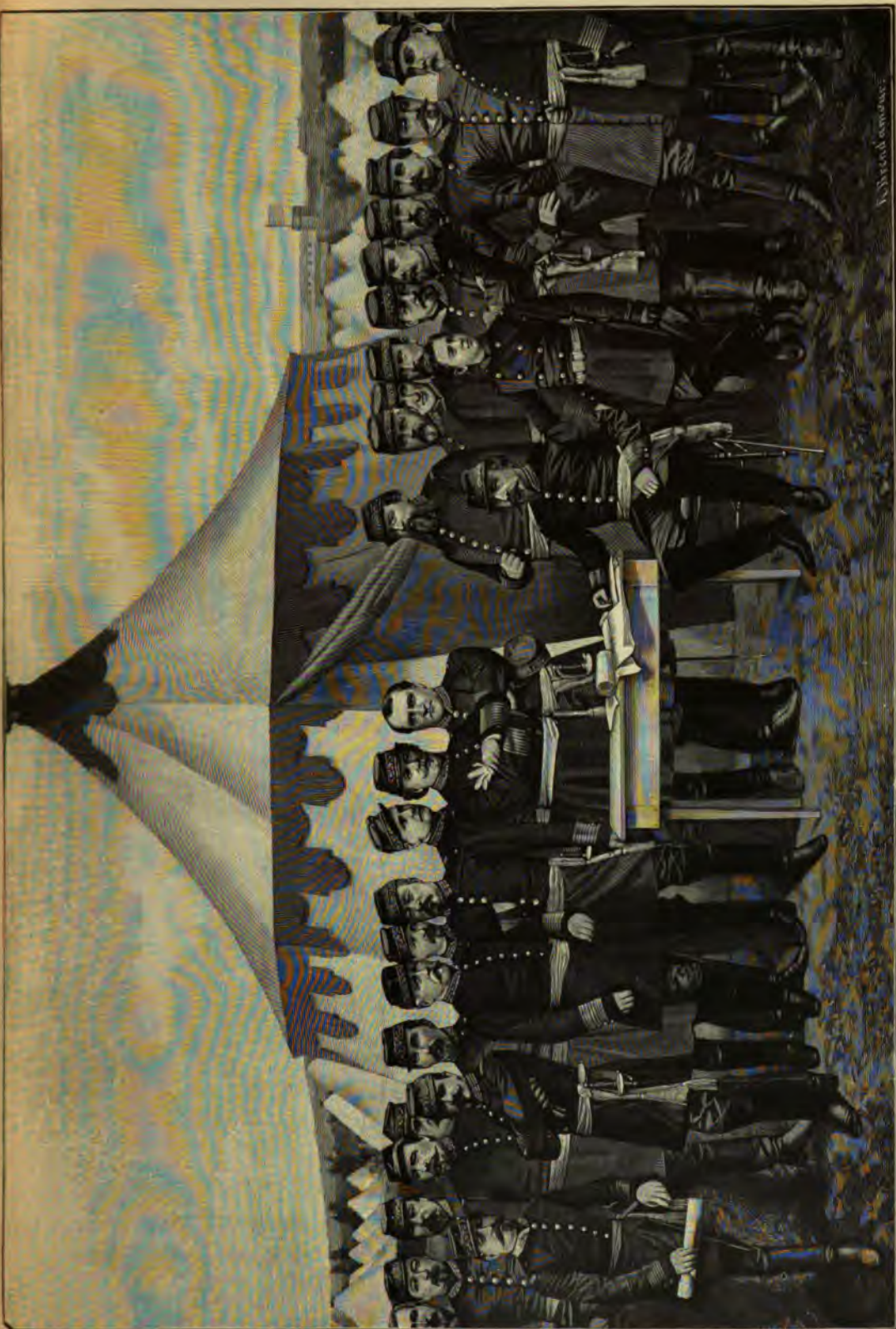
VIIth Army Corps: General Felix Douay.—Chief of the Staff: General Renson.—1st Division: General Conseil Dunesnil.—2nd Division: General Liébert.—3rd Division: General Dumont.—Cavalry Division: General Ameil.—Artillery Reserve; Colonel Aubac.—State of the Troops: 36 Infantry battalions, 2 Chasseur battalions, 20 squadrons, 72 guns, 18 mitrailleuses, and 4 companies of Engineers.—Of these 1 cavalry brigade was in Lyon, therefore only 12 squadrons.

Cavalry Reserve: 1st Division: General Du Barail.—2nd Division: General Vicomte de Bonnemains.—3rd Division: General de Forton.—State of the Troops: 48 squadrons, 30 guns, 6 mitrailleuses.

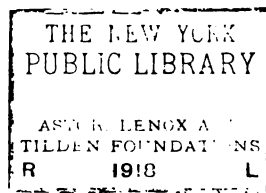
General Reserve Artillery: General Canu, 96 guns.

General Reserve Engineers: 3 companies, and 1 detachment of Sappers.

General state of the Army of the Rhine: 332 battalions, 220 squadrons, 154



[face p. 48.
 General Bourbaki. General Trochu. General Frossard. General Castelnaud. General Lebun.
 General Moreno. General de la Moscowa. Marshal MacMahon. Marshal Canrobert. NAPOLEON III. The Prince Imperial. General Rose. General Lepic.
 General Larigues. General Lacretelle. General Favé. General Pajol. Prince Napoleon. Marshal Leboeuf. General Douai. General Bataille. General de Bévillie.
 General Ladmirault. General Reille. Marshal Bazaine. Dr. Conneau. General Failly.



batteries with 780 guns and 144 mitrailleuses. The strength at the beginning of August amounted to 270,000 men. ¹

* * *

Railways have for a long time past been the chief means for the concentration and the advance of armies. The French railway-system, however, included four main lines leading from the interior of the country to the eastern frontier, terminating at Diedenhofen (Thionville), Metz (a local terminus), Nancy and Strassburg. Moreover, military preparations for effecting the continuous transport of troops had not been made, and accordingly the lines were frequently blocked.

The results of the mobilisation were on the whole so defective that the corps which were already in position at the end of July were imperfectly provided with the needful trains, ambulances, ammunitions and provision columns, so that the offensive movement planned for the 31st July had to be postponed, and meanwhile the Germans anticipated the French attack.

If in conclusion we pay some attention to the French fortifications, we shall find them very insufficiently garrisoned. The troops of the line had been generally incorporated in the field-army. The fortifications themselves were for the most part antiquated and unfit to offer any lengthy resistance to the artillery of the Germans.

Of the fortresses on the frontiers, Metz alone had advanced forts, and even these were partly unfinished.

* * *

With respect to ways and means the Corps Legislatif had voted at first 571 million francs. ²

The French fleet was so superior to the German in ships of every kind, that it was impossible to make a comparison. The marines, excellent troops, consisted of 4 regiments of 136 companies, 64 of these were, however, in the colonies. The marine artillery numbered 28 batteries, of which, however, only 20 with 120 guns were at home.

For a protracted war France had great resources in the tax-paying capacity and the warm patriotism of her people, and in a highly developed industry, which was able quickly to replace material that was lost or used up; while her sea-power enabled her to draw from abroad what the country could not supply.

* * *

THE GERMAN ARMIES.

The German Armies taking the field in 1870 under the command of King William I consisted of two great masses, those of the North German Confederation and those of the South German States. ³

I. The Army of the North German Confederation consisted of the Prussian Army

¹ When the new "Army of Châlons" was formed in the middle of August, as will be mentioned in due course, France was able to place two new Army Corps, the 12th and 13th, in the field, formed of marines, of those of the old line-regiments which were still disposable, and of the newly formed marching regiments.

² = £ 22,840,000. [*Trs.*]

³ The South German States were: Northern Hessen, Bavaria, Württemberg and Baden, all the rest belonged to the North German Confederation. [*Trs.*]

and the contingents of the other states. Of these latter several had been incorporated by military conventions in the Prussian Army, others had been allotted to the several Prussian Army Corps, which in contrast with French practice, existed already in peace time. The Grand Ducal Hessian Division (25th ¹) had also become by treaty a part of the army of the North German Confederation. The 12th (Royal-Saxon) Army Corps, which formed an organic whole, had been organized on the Prussian



Dragoon.
Cuirassier.

Hussar.

Landwehr Infantry. Pioneers.
Uhlan (Lancer.)

Horse Artilleryman.
Jäger. Rifleman of Infantry of the Line.

PRUSSIAN TROOPS.

system. In his capacity of Commander-in-Chief of the whole Confederation, the King of Prussia was the supreme military authority.

In accordance with the military law of the 9th of November, 1867, soldiers had to serve three years under the standards, four in the reserve and five in the Landwehr. Numerous furloughs were granted after two years' service. In the provinces annexed in 1866 there were created three new Army Corps, the 9th, 10th, and 11th. The newly formed bodies became as quickly and as thoroughly effective as those organised in 1860; ² this was all the more creditable because the accessions to the

¹ I. e. the 25th Division of the Army. [*Trs.*]

² When the whole Prussian Army was remodelled, [*Trs.*]

Army included a number of officers who could not be familiar with the ways and practices of the Prussian service and regulations. The impulse given by the rigid and punctual discharge of duty, by delight in active work, and by the love of country of an intelligent body of officers most brilliantly stood the test on this occasion.

Accordingly the newly formed Prussian Army Corps, viz., the 9th, 10th, and 11th were in 1870 fully fit to be led against the enemy, and proved it on the battle-field.

In the old Prussian troops the tradition of universal military duty, which had made soldiers of their fathers and grandfathers, formed an exceedingly powerful bond. The peculiarities of the different provinces showed themselves in the regiments, to whom King William had, in the reorganisation of 1860, restored the old names of the Wars of Liberation. The warlike experience of the German troops was recent, and fresh in their memory; a part of the Prussians had served in the war of 1864,¹ and the greater part of all the German troops in that of 1866.²

Service in the Prussian Army was always distinguished by rigid regulations, the utmost punctuality and accuracy, and the strictest drill. It was chiefly in consequence of this that it was possible to maintain a faultless discipline. Though the military code contained stern laws, yet the punishments—even the mere disciplinary ones—were far less severe and harsh than those of France.

The reputation for warlike capacity of *all* the German tribes is ancient and well founded, albeit there are perceptible differences in the temperament of the various races.

The German, who is, as a rule, of larger build than the Frenchman, can endure better the inclemencies of weather, especially of cold seasons. The French charge may perhaps be delivered with greater impetuosity, but the German has greater solidity and firmer resolution. In tenacity and endurance in the fight the German surpasses the Frenchman and is less liable to the disintegrating effect of defeat.

Yet another contrast with the French Army must be noted. Universal Military Service had drawn into the ranks the educated classes, who exercised a most salutary influence on the men. The officers were recruited solely from the cultured and higher classes of society. Penetrated by the principles of honour and fidelity, animated by love of country and military pride, efficient in the practical discharge of duty, and theoretically well prepared for their work in the military schools and by private study, the officers were highly respected in the army and in the country, and this respect had lately been increased by the extraordinarily rapid successes of 1866.³

The incessant stream of recruits due to the three years' service system obliged the body of officers continually to keep all these faculties at full pitch. Great independence, such as had never existed in the French Army, was allowed to commanding officers and company commanders in the administration and training of their men. To this was due their joy and delight in the work and the free exercise of all their powers. The whole body of officers was cast in one mould; whilst in France the very reverse of this was the case.

¹ Against Denmark. [*Trs.*]

² Against Austria. [*Trs.*]

³ These statements seem to clash with the experiences of foreign visitors in Germany, who often notice the unpopularity of officers, especially of Prussian officers, with the Civil population. It must, however, be observed that Gen. Boguslawski does not speak of popularity, which is for the purpose, an irrelevant matter, but of that kind of respect and confidence which assures effective unity in action. [*Trs.*]

The officers of the Reserve and the Landwehr were taken from the *Freiwillige*.¹ Just at that time, these men possessed very great practical experience in consequence of the large numbers who had been called upon to serve during the years of the reorganization of the army, of the occupation of the Polish frontiers in 1863 and of the wars of 1864 and 1866.

The corps of non-commissioned officers in the standing army consisted mostly of *Kapitulanten*,² who were distinguished by soldierly bearing, good patriotic disposition and experience in the service. The non-commissioned officers of the Reserve and Landwehr may possibly from the point of view of strictly military training, have been the least efficient part of the army, but their zeal and self-abnegation compensated many defects.

The Landwehr had in 1867 and 1868 been reorganised. It was to consist of 216 battalions, but only 166 had actually been formed, because in the newly annexed Prussian provinces and in the other states of the North German Confederation there were not yet a sufficient number of men previously trained.³

The other North German contingents were organised on the Prussian model. The selection of officers was generally carried out on Prussian principles.

The mobilisation was based on the most careful preparation of the necessary orders of summonses to attend, of routes for march and movements by rail; on exact determination of time, within which each operation had to be completed; the distribution of arms and equipments to the different army-sections and Landwehr districts, and on the co-operation of the military and civil authorities. All this was laid down in the scheme and instructions for mobilisation, and in the mobilisation tables which were in the hands of the troops and were always carefully posted up to date. It was the duty of the commanders of Landwehr districts to call in the men and forward them to their destination.

The routes⁴ for marches had been recently revised; the hospitals, the nursing of the sick, the railway and telegraph services were admirably organised.

On the other hand, the infantry had not turned the tactical experiences of 1864 and 1866 to the fullest account. To some extent this force entered on the campaign trained in two systems of tactics that were inconsistent. The method of fighting adapted to the breech-loader had not yet been quite mastered. There had been some hesitation in sufficiently recasting the regulation of 1847, which was still in force. On the drill-

¹ A *Freiwilliger* is a soldier who has passed certain examinations, and finds his own uniform and maintenance. In return for this he has to serve only one year, and can, under certain conditions, hope for promotion if he prefers to remain in the army. [*Trs.*]

² A *Kapitulant* is a *Freiwilliger* who has bound himself to remain with the army beyond the obligatory time of service. The "Capitulation" is a concession made only to men of special worth or fitness for the service. [*Trs.*]

³ Obviously, as the Landwehr is formed of men who have passed through the army, it is a body which cannot be fully developed till the strength of the army has been for some years sufficient to supply the trained men for the Landwehr. It is from its nature a force that cannot be suddenly improvised. [*Trs.*]

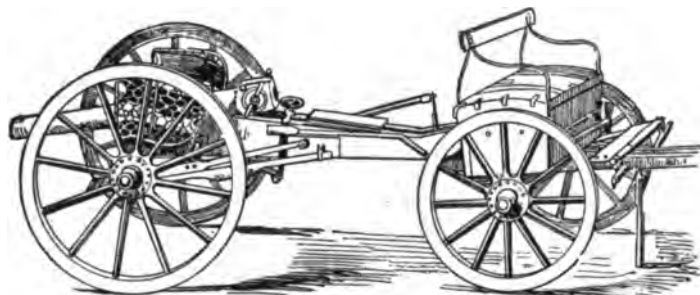
⁴ "Routes" are in all armies issued to bodies of troops ordered to move. They indicate the roads or lines of railway to be followed, and the halting-stations, and they give such information as is necessary for carrying out the order given. The point to which Gen. Boguslawski here draws attention, is not the fact that "routes" were issued, but that the information contained in them had been carefully kept up to date, a very important and very difficult matter. [*Trs.*]

ground the infantry often still moved according to the antiquated forms of this regulation, but in field-mancœuvres it skilfully applied the method of company-columns and skirmishing. Yet it, like all the armies of those days, lacked the power to move and fight in *large* swarms of skirmishers.

On the other hand, in the secret instructions issued in 1869 for the cavalry and artillery, the right path had been entered upon. The cavalry, formed in independent divisions, was instructed to take up the rôle it played in Frederick's and Napoleon's armies, to be the eyes and ears of the army, far in front of it, and when opportunity occurred, to charge home on the battle-field. The training of man and horse was excellent in every detail. Little attention had been paid to fighting on foot. The uhlans and cuirassiers were supplied with pistols, and the hussars and dragoons carried carbines of the needle-gun pattern.

The artillery had been taught to act in masses at the beginning of the fight, and so prepared for the infantry the road to victory. For that reason the name "Reserve-artillery" was changed into "Corps-artillery." The horse-artillery used the rifled four-pounder; the field-artillery the six-pounder,—both of these being breech-loaders of cast steel.

The ammunition consisted of percussion shells which only exploded on striking the ground; and of case, which was only used to repel an attack. Shrapnel was not used by the artillery of those days; neither was the siege-artillery as yet separate from the field-artillery. It



PRUSSIAN FIELD-GUN.

consisted of guns of various calibres up to the rifled twenty-four pounder. Special mention must be made of the rifled mortars, the terrible efficiency of which was subsequently sufficiently proved.

The North German Army was divided into troops for the field (of the line and mobilised Landwehr), garrisons (Landwehr and garrison-artillery) and reserves.

A regiment of infantry consisted of 3 battalions of 1002 men; the battalion had 4 companies. Every regiment included a battalion of reserves.

A battalion of Jägers¹ consisted of 4 companies and 1 company of reserves. The battalion of pioneers was similarly constituted.

II. THE SOUTH GERMAN TROOPS.

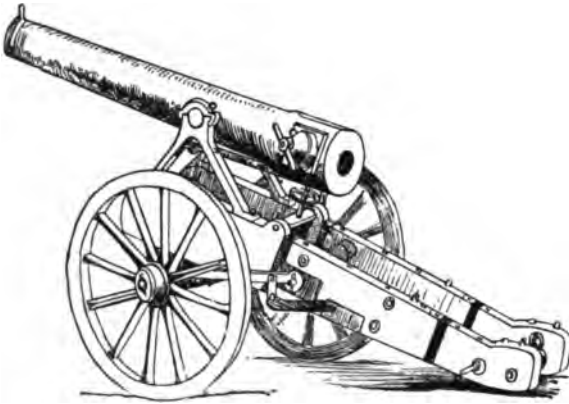
After the war of 1866, Bavaria, Württemberg and Baden mostly followed the Prussian model in formation, organisation, mobilisation and manner of fighting. Isolated departures from this model need not be noticed here. It is enough to mention that the time of service with the standards was, in Bavaria, hardly 18 months; in Württem-

¹ Light Infantry. [*Trs.*]

berg, in the infantry, two years, and in the other services three years. In Baden the Prussian regulations were more closely followed than in any other South German state. As the North German Military Laws had only been recently adopted, it is clear that the Landwehr could not be raised to the same proportionate strength as in the old Prussian provinces.

The weapon of the infantry in Württemberg and Baden was the needle-gun; in Bavaria the converted Podewils rifle; 4 battalions of jägers were, however, already armed with the new Werder rifle with an automatic cock. The arm of the artillery was of the same model as the Prussian. The cavalry also was, generally speaking, armed precisely as in Prussia.

All over South Germany the utmost effort was made to remove the defects observed in 1866, and to render the defensive forces of the country equal to all emergencies.



PRUSSIAN SIEGE-GUN.

The Bavarian Army was divided into two Army Corps, the Armies of Württemberg and of Baden each formed one Army Corps.

The South German sovereigns, viz., the Kings of Bavaria and Württemberg and the Grand Duke of Baden, in conformity with the treaties previously concluded, ordered the mobilisation of their armies and placed them under the command of Prussia. Now, for the first time since a period beyond memory, a German Army moved into the field under an undivided command.

It is unnecessary to describe here in detail the Royal Commander-in-Chief. The image of him is deeply engraved in every German heart, and will be transmitted to our children as one of the most imposing heroic figures of the German people.

As far as concerns the military capacity of the Great Emperor, it is enough to mention that in 1814 he earned the Iron Cross in the thickest of the fighting, and that since that time he had gained in a long course of years an experience beyond compare in all branches of the service. In addition to his firmness of character he possessed in a high degree the power to win hearts, and in his personal intercourse he was as dignified as he was charming, proving himself thereby a prince unique of his kind.

Though often misunderstood and undervalued, both as a politician and as a soldier, yet he was the soul of all the military reforms carried through after his father's death in 1840, and the troops even then loved him with an unequalled affection, as is sufficiently proved by the song of 1848,

“Prince of Prussia chivalrous and brave,
Return to thy troops, adored commander,”¹ etc.

¹ This was sung at a time when the revolutionary agitation of 1848 had for a time compelled this Prince to leave the country. [*Trs.*]

His insight into the handling of troops, in tactical and strategic situations, was clear and penetrating, his judgment sound and quickly formed. The keen insight with which he chose his chief officers, among whom the triple star, Bismarck, Moltke and Roon, shines brilliantly, must also be acknowledged; but it must be expressly stated—Moltke himself testifies to it—that the King always reserved for himself the final decision. So the victor of Sadowa, having at his side the military genius of Moltke, stepped forth to meet the fast aging victor of Solferino, being indeed his senior in years, but in full possession of all his powers.

Prince Frederick Charles, who had been thrice put to the test in the field, twice



WÜRTTEMBERGERS.
Cavalry.

Artillery.

Infantry.

BAVARIANS.
Artillery. Light Horse.
Infantry. Cuirassier.

SOUTH GERMAN TROOPS.

in command of an army; the Crown Prince, who by his action had decided Königgrätz, both assisted by excellent chiefs of the Staff, were worthy to co-operate with the King as leaders of the Second and Third Armies.

To these was added later the Crown Prince of Saxony, who had gloriously commanded his corps at Königgrätz. ¹ He was subsequently the Commander of the Army of the Maas, when it was formed.

¹ At that battle the Crown Prince of Saxony fought on the side of Austria against Prussia. [Trs.]

General Baron von Moltke, at first in the Danish and afterwards in the Prussian service, had had his character strengthened in the school of a hard life, yet the beautiful and humane elements in it made him one of the most attractive personalities as a whole to be found in history. His capacity as a soldier was first brought to light by his command in Turkey, especially at the battle of Nisib. In 1864 he was for a time Chief of the General Staff of the Allied Armies.¹ The war of 1866 had raised him to the summit of warlike glory, whatever faults strategic doctrinaires may find in his conduct of the Bohemian campaign.

In his conduct he combined, in rare measure, firmness with modesty and tact, and he thereby succeeded in 1870 in overcoming many a difficulty that arose in his own camp.

General von Steinmetz, commanding the First Army,² was a man of the Old Prussian School, of stern will and sense of duty, and an excellent leader of a corps. The days of Nachod³ and Skalitz⁴ crowned him with unfading laurels. The history of this war will shew how far he was fit for his new post.

A number of Royal Princes and Rulers of Germany, like the Grand Dukes of Baden and Mecklenburg, Prince Albrecht of Prussia, Prince George of Saxony, the Hereditary Prince of Hessen-Darmstadt, the Princes Luitpold and Leopold of Bavaria and many other men of princely rank held commands in the army, or some of them merely accompanied it; this had a good effect on the troops and on the German races.

ORDER OF BATTLE OF ALL THE GERMAN ARMIES ON THE 1ST AUGUST, 1870.

Commander-in-Chief: His Majesty King William of Prussia.—Chief of the Staff: General of Infantry⁵ Baron von Moltke.—Quartermaster-General: Lieutenant-General von Podbielski.—Inspector General of Artillery: General of Infantry von Hindersin.—Inspector General of Engineers: Lieutenant-General von Kleist.—Chief of the Military Cabinet:⁶ Lieutenant-General von Treskow.—Commissary-General: Lieutenant-General von Stosch⁷.—Attached to Head Quarters: H. R. H. Prince Charles of Prussia; H. R. H. The Grand Duke of Saxony; H. R. H. Prince Luitpold of Bavaria; H. R. H. The Hereditary Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin.

War Ministry: Minister for War, General of Infantry von Roon.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs: Chancellor of the Confederation and Prime Minister, Major-General Count von Bismarck-Schönhausen.

Military Inspector of Volunteer Nurses: Henry XI, Prince of Pless.

¹ Of Austria and Prussia against Denmark. [*Trs.*]

² The right wing of the German forces. [*Trs.*]

³ The battle of Nachod, fought on 27th June, 1866, and won by the Prussians against Austria, opened to the Prussians the way into Bohemia.

⁴ The battle was fought on the next day and also won by Prussia. In both these engagements Steinmetz had had the chief command. [*Trs.*]

⁵ The rank of General of Infantry, Cavalry, or Artillery corresponds to the rank of full General in the British Army. [*Trs.*]

⁶ The Military Cabinet has to do with promotion of, changes among, confidential reports on, or compulsory retirement of officers of the German Army. Its reports direct to the Emperor. [*Trs.*]

⁷ Generals and other officers aides-de-camp to the King, and the other aides-de-camp, are not mentioned by name. Of the officers of the Staff only the Chiefs of the Staff and the Quartermasters-General.

FIRST ARMY.

General of Infantry von Steinmetz.—Chief of the Staff: Major-General von Sperling.—Deputy Quartermaster-General: Colonel Count von Wartensleben.—Attached to Head Quarters: H. R. H. Prince Adalbert of Prussia.

VIIth Army Corps: General of Infantry von Zastrow.—Chief of the Staff: Colonel von Unger.—13th Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General von Glümer.—14th Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General von Kameke.—Corps Artillery: Colonel von Helden Sarnowski.—State of the Troops: 24 battalions of Infantry, 1 Jäger battalion, 8 squadrons, 84 guns, 3 Pioneer companies.¹

VIIIth Army Corps: General of Infantry von Goeben.—Chief of the Staff: Colonel von Witzendorf.—15th Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General von Weltzien.—16th Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General von Barnekow.—Corps Artillery: Colonel von Broecker.

3rd Cavalry Division: Lieutenant-General Count von der Gröben.—State of the Troops: 16 squadrons, 6 guns.

State of the Troops in the 1st Army: 50 battalions of Infantry, 32 squadrons, 30 batteries (180 guns). To the 1st Army were added later the 1st Army Corps: 25 battalions of Infantry, 8 squadrons, 14 batteries (84 guns), and the 1st Cavalry Division with 24 squadrons, 1 battery (6 guns). Altogether: 75 battalions of Infantry, 64 squadrons, 45 batteries (270 guns).

SECOND ARMY.

General of Cavalry H. R. H. Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia.—Chief of the Staff: Major-General von Stiehle.—Deputy Quartermaster-General: Colonel von Hertzberg.—Attached to Head Quarters: H. H. Duke Paul of Mecklenburg-Schwerin; H. H. Landgrave Frederick of Hesse.

Guards Corps: General of Cavalry H. R. H. Prince Augustus of Württemberg.—Chief of the Staff: Major-General von Dannenberg.—1st Guards Infantry Division: Major-General von Pape.—2nd Guards Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General v. Budritzki.—Guards Cavalry Division: Lieutenant-General Count von der Goltz.—Corps Artillery: Colonel von Scherbening.

IIIrd Army Corps: Lieutenant-General von Alvensleben II.—Chief of the Staff: Colonel von Voigts-Rhetz.—5th Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General von Stülpnagel.—6th Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General Baron von Buddenbrock.—Corps Artillery: Colonel von Dresky.

IVth Army Corps: General of Infantry von Alvensleben I.—Chief of the Staff: Colonel von Thile.—7th Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General on the Staff von Schwartzhoff.—8th Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General von Schöler.—Corps Artillery: Colonel Crusius.

IXth Army Corps: General of Infantry von Manstein.—Chief of the Staff: Major Bronsart of Schellendorf.—18th Division: Lieutenant-General Baron von Wrangel.—Division of the Grand-duchy of Hesse (25th): Lieutenant-General H. H. Prince Ludwig

¹ The state of the German Army Corps is almost exactly the same in every case, consequently a state is only given below of the Armies, and the case of any special arrangements. In the case of Cavalry Divisions it is only given where the strength is other than 24 squadrons.

of Hesse.—25th Cavalry Brigade: Major-General Baron von Schlotheim: (Prussian Army).—Corps Artillery: Colonel von Jagemann.

Xth Army Corps: General of Infantry von Voight-Rhetz.—Chief of the Staff: Lieutenant-Colonel von Caprivi.—19th Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General von Schwartzkoppen.—20th Infantry Division: Major-General von Kraatz-Koschlau.—Corps Artillery: Colonel Baron v. d. Goltz.

XIIth (Royal Saxon) Army Corps: General of Infantry H. R. H. the Crown Prince of Saxony.—Chief of the Staff: Colonel von Zeschwitz.—Attached to Head Quarters: H. R. H. Charles Theodore, Bavarian Duke.—23rd Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General H. R. H. Prince George of Saxony.—24th Infantry Division: Major-General Nehrhoff von Holderberg.—12th Cavalry Division: Major-General Count zur Lippe. State of the Troops: 16 squadrons, 6 guns.—Corps Artillery: Colonel Funke.

5th Cavalry Division: Lieutenant-General Baron von Rheinbaben.—State of the Troops: 36 squadrons, 12 guns.—6th Cavalry Division: H. H. Major-General Duke William of Mecklenburg-Schwerin.—State of the Troops: 20 squadrons, 6 guns.

State of the Troops in the IInd Army: 156 battalions of Infantry, 148 squadrons, 91 batteries (546 guns). There was added later the IInd Army Corps: 25 battalions of Infantry, 8 squadrons, 14 batteries (84 guns). Altogether 181 battalions of Infantry, 156 squadrons, 105 batteries (630 guns).

THIRD ARMY.

General of Infantry H. R. H. The Crown Prince of Prussia.—Chief of the Staff: Lieutenant-General von Blumenthal.—Deputy-Quartermaster-General: Colonel von Gottberg.

Vth Army Corps: Lieutenant-General von Kirchbach.—Chief of the Staff: Colonel v. d. Esch.—9th Infantry Division: Major-General von Sandrart.—10th Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General von Schmidt.—Corps Artillery: Lieutenant-Colonel Köhler.

XIth Army Corps: Lieutenant-General von Bose.—Chief of the Staff: Major-General Stein of Kaminski.—Attached to Head Quarters: H. H. Duke George of Saxe-Meiningen; Prince zu Wied.—21st Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General von Schachtmeyer.—22nd Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General von Gersdorff.—Corps Artillery: Colonel von Oppeln-Bronikowski.

Ist Bavarian Army Corps: General of Infantry Baron v. d. Tann.—Chief of the Staff: Lieutenant-Colonel von Heinleth.—1st Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General von Stephan.—2nd Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General Count zu Pappenheim.—Cuirassier Brigade: Major-General von Tausch.—Reserve Division of Artillery: Colonel Bronzetti.

IIInd Bavarian Army Corps: General of Infantry Ritter von Hartmann.—Chief of the Staff: Colonel Baron von Horn.—3rd Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General von Walther.—4th Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General Count Bothmer.—Uhlán Brigade: Major-General Baron von Mulzer.—Reserve Division of Artillery: Colonel von Pillement.

Württemberg Field-Division: Lieutenant-General von Oberritz (Prussian Army).—Chief of the Staff: Colonel von Triebig.—Three Infantry Brigades.—Cavalry Brigade: Major-General Count von Schéler.—State of the Troops: 12 battalions of Infantry, 3 Jäger battalions, 10 squadrons, 54 guns, and 2 Pioneer companies.

Baden Field-Division: Lieutenant-General von Beyer.—Chief of the Staff: Lieutenant-Colonel von Leszczyński.—Cavalry Brigade: Major-General Baron von La Roche-Starkenfels.—Corps Artillery: Major Rochlitz.—State of the Troops: 13 battalions, 4 squadrons, 54 guns, 1 Pioneer company.

4th Cavalry Division: General of Cavalry H. R. H. Prince Albrecht of Prussia (the elder).

State of the Troops in the IIIrd Army: 128 battalions of Infantry, 102 squadrons, 80 batteries (480 guns).

There were added later the VIth Army Corps: 25 battalions Infantry, 8 squadrons, 14 batteries (84 guns); and the 2nd Cavalry Division: 24 squadrons, 2 batteries (12 guns). Altogether 153 Infantry battalions, 134 squadrons, 96 batteries (576 guns).

FIELD TROOPS NOT BELONGING TO ANY OF THE 3 ARMIES ON 1ST AUGUST, 1870.

Ist Army Corps: General of Cavalry Baron von Manteuffel.—Chief of the Staff: Lieut.-Col. v. d. Burg.—1st Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General von Benthaim.—2nd Infantry Division: Major-Generaal von Pritzelwitz.—Corps Artillery: Colonel Jungé.

IInd Army Corps: General of Infantry von Fransecky.—Chief of the Staff: Colonel von Wichmann.—3rd Infantry Division: Major-General von Hartmann.—4th Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General Hann von Weiher.—Corps Artillery: Colonel Petzel.

VIth Army Corps: General of Cavalry von Tümpling.—Chief of the Staff: Colonel von Salviati.—11th Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General von Gordon.—12th Infantry Division: Lieutenant-General von Hoffmann.—Corps Artillery: Colonel Arnold.—1st Cavalry Division: Lieutenant-General von Hartmann.—2nd Cavalry Division: Lieutenant-General Count zu Stolberg-Wernigerode.

17th Infantry Division: ¹ Lieutenant-General von Schimmermann.—17th Cavalry Brigade: Major-General von Rauch.—State of the Troops: 13 battalions of Infantry, 12 squadrons, 36 guns, and 1 Pioneer company.

MOBILISED LANDWEHR, AFTERWARDS CALLED 'RESERVE TROOPS.'

Landwehr Division of the Guards: Lieutenant-General Baron von Loën.—State of the Troops: 12 battalions Infantry, 4 squadrons, 18 guns. ²—1st Landwehr Division: Major-General von Treskow.—2nd Landwehr Division: Major-General Baron Schuler von Senden.

Director-General in the District of the Ist, IInd, IXth, and Xth Army Corps: General of Infantry Vogel von Falkenstein.

General Officer commanding the mobilised troops in this District: H. R. H. the Grand Duke Frederick Franz of Mecklenberg-Schwerin.

Director-General in the District of the IIIrd and IVth Army Corps: General of Infantry von Bonin, A.D.C.

Director-General in the District of the Vth and VIIth Army Corps: Lieutenant-General von Löwenfeld.

Director-General in the District of the VIIth, VIIIth and XIth Army Corps: General of Infantry Herwarth von Bittenfeld.

¹ Detached from the IXth Army Corps for coast defence.

² The same state for all the Landwehr Divisions.

Director-General in the Department of the XIIth Army Corps: Lieut.-General von Fabrice.

Director-General for the Kingdom of Württemberg: Lieutenant-General von Suckow.

Total strength of the Field Army: 474 battalions, 382 squadrons, 264 batteries, 53 Pioneer companies. Number of men: Infantry 462,300, Cavalry 56,800, with 1584 Guns.

Garrison and Reserve (Ersatz) Troops: 328 battalions, 144½ squadrons, 82 batteries, 201 companies of Garrison Artillery, 51½ Pioneer companies. Number of men: Infantry 297,500, Cavalry 25,890, Garrison Artillery 40,500; 462 Field-guns.

General state of the German mobilised and non-mobilised forces: 1,183,389 men, 250,373 horses.

This Army was abundantly equipped with hospitals—including volunteer nurses and the order of St. John, with supply columns of provisions and ammunition, light and heavy pontoons, regimental transport, field-railway- and telegraph-sections and commissariat. For the despatch of the troops to their several points of concentration the North German Army had six, the South German Army three lines of railway at their disposal. All the time-tables were worked out and were forwarded to their respective army-corps, together with the order for mobilisation. The commissariat was in working order, and the commandants of stations on the lines of advance at once entered on their duties.

The fortresses on the western frontiers and the threatened places on the coast had their full garrisons by the end of July. The fortifications along the coast were completed, and the ports as much as possible protected by sub-marine mines.

As for ways and means; there were 30,000,000 Thalers=£4,500,000 in the Prussian treasury; the North German Diet voted 120,000,000 Thalers=£18,000,000 and the South German Diets voted 33,823,000 Florins=£3,380,000. Total £25,880,000.

* * *

The North German Navy could only think of pitting itself against the French Navy, if the right moment could be seized for making sally out of the harbours upon isolated portions of the enemy's fleet. As a whole it had to restrict itself to a simple defensive.

* * *

The challenge of France made the national sentiment of Germany burst into full flame. All internal disputes were forgotten, the remembrance of the shame and oppression Germany had endured at the hands of Napoleon I was vividly recalled to the minds of Germans, and the whole German Army down to the humblest of the rank and file was inspired by a sense of the righteousness of their cause, and filled with defiant courage, with an assurance of victory, and with the firm determination once for all thoroughly to settle accounts with the old enemy.

P A R T II

MILITARY HISTORY OF THE WAR

CHAPTER I

THE GERMAN LINES, WEISSENBURG, WÖRTH
(15th July to 25th August)

By MAJOR-GENERAL ALBERT PFISTER, PH. D.

THE RHINE AND THE FRONTIER

ON the 15th July the windows of the Royal palace were brightly lit up till late into the night. The men who in that solemn hour had charge of the welfare of the country, were within, deliberating and working. The King was holding a Council of War. The decision was: "Call out the whole army; the 16th of July is fixed as the first day of mobilisation."

The morning of July 16th dawned. The almost silent busy work of mobilisation began. In presence of the manifest danger from without, all political parties fraternised. During the last few years they had been well on the way towards creating permanent hostility, between South and North, between left and right bank of the river Maine, between Liberals and Conservatives. Now the quarrels were hushed. Once more, the Germans were all aglow, as they had been in the heyday of 1813, when for the first time all of them went forth to found a German Empire, united, free, and great. At that time Goethe had expressed the thought: "This first rousing of mind and spirits will not suffice, the sleep has been too profound." Now hearts were for the second time stirred mightily and passionately. In fact they had been for a long time awake, and had used every day of peace in busy preparation.

Thus it was possible to guide into safe channels the stream of emotion and fully awakened enthusiasm, so that the universal exaltation might not uselessly evaporate, or embody itself in deeds at an unsuitable time and under unsuitable conditions. Grave men, in appearance cold and unsympathetic, moved through the excited masses gathered in streets and squares, giving advice, information and guidance. From hour to hour, from day to day, the whole population was made to understand clearly and definitely the course to be pursued; every individual had his appointed task.

The transition of an army from a peace to a war footing consists of two parts: mobilisation, and the line of battle. The first part is carried out at home, in the garrisons, as calmly as possible within the sphere of the companies, squadrons etc., and terminates when on the last day of mobilisation the battalions and regiments

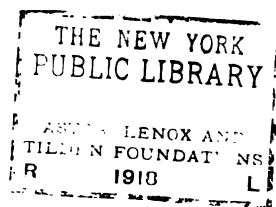
stand at the disposal of the authorities with full ranks and fully equipped. From the place of assembly, where the army-corps, the divisions and brigades have met and closed up their ranks, a new task begins: the tactical and strategic employment of the troops. From this point it ceases to be a work of regulations and pre-arrangements, for a new disturbing factor is introduced into the plans previously formed: the news from the foe, which must determine the nature of the work in the field and the resolutions to be taken.

The mobilisation of the North German Army had year by year been adapted to the new circumstances, and had been settled by the Ministry of War and the General Staff. It is one of the duties of the General Staff in time of peace to work out in the fullest detail and for all conceivable warlike emergencies the grouping and despatch of the troops; it is its function to have these plans ready in anticipation. But in confidential discussions with the commanders of the South German Armies an understanding had also been reached with them in regard to the most important points. The plans that had been drawn up required no alteration whatever. All that had to be done was to carry them out.

Accordingly in the last hour of July 15th the respective orders had only to be taken out of their pigeon-holes and to be authorised by the King's signature. Then with one jerk the mighty organisation of the army was set in motion and began to work with conscious activity through all Germany, from town to town, from village to village. Every day, every hour, every fraction of an hour had its appointed work; every single worker from the Field-Marshal down to the last tailor had his task for each day allotted to him. For every section of the army time-tables had been drawn up, place, day and hour of departure by train, duration of the journey, stations of refreshment, and places of destination near the great centres of concentration had been fixed. The selection of these centres for placing the forces in line is of supreme importance, as an error committed in these can subsequently be rectified only with great difficulty.

It had long before been determined in case of a war with France to place three armies in the field: the First Army on the right wing, consisting of the VIIth and VIIIth Corps, was to assemble at Wittlich on the left bank of the Moselle, a little to the north-east of Treves. The Second Army, that of the centre, at Neunkirchen and Homburg, in the western part of the Palatinate; it consisted of the Guards, and the IIIrd, IVth and Xth Corps. On the left wing of the German line was placed the Third Army, assembled at Landau and Rastatt; it consisted of the Vth and XIth Prussian, the Ist and IInd Bavarian Corps and the two Divisions of Württemberg and Baden. There was further provided as a reinforcement for the Second Army, the IXth and XIIth, assembling at Mayence. The Ist, IInd and VIth Prussian Corps were meanwhile not taken into account, and remained at the disposal of the authorities; as the lines of railway were not set free till somewhat later for their despatch to the western frontier.

Two things are clear in considering the distribution of the German Armies. Firstly: that the Army of the right wing, the First Army, that of the Moselle, was the weakest of the three; it numbered 60,000 men. More than twice as numerous was the Army of the left wing, the Third Army. The Second Army, that of the centre, assembling at Mayence, was the strongest of the three, it numbered 200,000 men, being as numerous as the two wing armies taken together.





A. Calandrelli.

RELIEF ON THE SIEGESÄULE (COLUMN OF VICTORY) BERLIN.
(From a special photograph.)

[Ince p. 63.]

Secondly: That the main forces of the Germans were concentrated, in Lower Elsass, near Lauterburg and Weissenburg, where they could encircle and threaten the projecting point of the wedge-shaped French frontier penetrating into German territory.

But this stage had not yet been reached. In Germany they were still busy as ants on their hill, here they were calling in the men, there the men were arriving. Nothing was allowed to interfere with this work. "Our calculations are that, on the tenth day of mobilisation, the 25th of July, the first divisions of the army should arrive near the French frontier, and that on the 28th of July two Army Corps should be assembled there. On the 18th day of mobilisation, August 2nd, our forces in position on the frontier should amount to 300,000 men. We have no reason whatever to assume that the gathering of the mobilised French troops can be effected more quickly." The 2nd of August then, being the 18th day of the mobilisation, was the first goal set before us; on August 3rd the fight might begin.

Our mobilisation was rendered wonderfully easier by the zeal, the joyousness with which Reserve-men, Landwehr-men and Freiwilige flocked to the standards; by the devotion, skill and wariness with which all the work was carried out. Young men, who occupied assured posts abroad,¹ returned home before the summons reached them. The smith laid down his hammer, and the tailor his needle; the universities and upper forms of the schools supplied recruits, and whoever was unfit for active service on account of some infirmity, or of being too young, took voluntary service in the hospitals. Nevertheless brave boys, not a few, entered the ranks; the youngest Freiwilige in this war, probably, was the son of the Bavarian Member of Parliament, Völk, who was barely 15 years old. He went through the whole campaign and returned home safe and sound.

This was not the mobilisation of an army; no, it was the mobilisation of the whole people to the last man that was available for the War, of a people flowing and streaming to the Rhine, under the deep conviction that the sacredness of the German hearth and home was at stake, that this was the time to free the country from the last shreds of foreign tutelage.

The German press, abandoning all party politics and cosmopolitan sentimentality, rendered valuable service. "France declares war against Prussia," writes the "Westphälische Merkur", "and we reply: They shall not have it, the free, the German Rhine! This reply we reiterate as long we have breath in our breasts, this reply we confirm with German blows, as long as a drop of blood rolls in our veins."

It was a universal cry: "Safety for the country, and down with the ruthless aggressor!" What Paul Pfizer had foreseen and expressed more clearly even than Fichte was now realized at a stroke.

It was no longer the old Germany, feeble, divided, with which France had been reckoning. Some decades previously Edward Quinet had warned Frenchmen that Germany was no longer the land of philosophic speculation. And when the war broke

¹ We heard on excellent authority of a case in London, where a young German clerk, on leaving for the war, received from his English employers three months' salary in advance, with cordial wishes for his safe return and the assurance that his post would be kept open for him. In the face of cases such as this, which can be multiplied indefinitely, what becomes of the charge against Englishmen, that they at the time failed in sympathy with the Germans. [Trs.]

out, Colonel von Stoffel, the Military Attaché of France in Berlin, raised his voice, saying: "Do not neglect taking into consideration the inexhaustible defensive power, the moral force and endurance of the resistance of a people, subject to universal, military service and to compulsory school-attendance; of a people where in all grades of society the simple, unpretentious discharge of duty is regarded as a mere matter of course." It was all to no purpose; the French could not and would not part with their preconceived and comfortable notions about Germany. From the 15th of July onwards Paris was at times no better than a mad-house. The old revolutionary song, the Marseillaise, once more resounded on all sides; on the 10th of July the scores for it had already been distributed to the bands of the regiments in Paris. It was a



MAX SCHNECKENBURGER.



KARL WILHELM.

strange fact that that intoxicating song, with its roaring melody, which the young Republic well-nigh a century previously had thundered into the ears of decrepit Europe, had again come to be honoured in the last days of an Empire that had made it one of its chief tasks to hold all public life in tutelage.

As had happened in 1813, so now, the delight in song took far greater hold of the Germans. As an omen of happy augury the people chose for its favourite song, for its real war-song: "The Watch on the Rhine." That was the song to which they had recourse in the days of anxious waiting; that was the song that was pealed forth by the regiments when they crossed the Rhine and when they marched to battle; that was the song that rang across the battle-field and through the festive halls when victory was celebrated; that also was the song that transfigured the

features of him who, with deadly wound in his breast, lay dying on the field and gave his last thoughts to his loved ones at home.

In the year 1840, German land and the German river had been threatened by the French. Then, as now, all internal bickerings had disappeared, and the heroes of Dennewitz ¹ and Leipzig ² shone forth before the eyes of the Germans; the people felt itself at one with its princes; love for the beauties of the Rhine country itself stimulated patriotism. Becker's Rhine Song; then leapt forth:

"They shall not have it, the free, the German Rhine."

The unanimous enthusiasm roused by Becker's song, evoked other melodies. It was a native of Suabia, Max Schneckenburger, who then produced "The Watch on the Rhine," and now after thirty years, having been set to music by Karl Wilhelm of Thuringia, it became the favourite German song, the song of solace, of war, of victory.

The 19th of July, the fourth day of mobilisation, arrived; the transport of the troops to the French frontier might begin. Meanwhile all went on smoothly and calmly; the men reported themselves in the garrisons of North Germany, of Bavaria, Württemberg, Baden and Hesse. Somebody in Baden wrote at the time: "When the preparations for the war in 1866 began, there were all over Baden wild confusion and great noise; to-day everything goes on as calmly as possible and the movements of the troops are hardly noticed." Close to the frontier, the assembling French forces were faced only by the small garrisons of Saarbrücken, Landau and Kehl; and at intervals between these, there were small posts occupied by sections of troops that had hastened up. Here and there shots were exchanged between patrols and small reconnoitring parties. Nothing seems to have annoyed the French more, or to have more upset their original calculations, than the resolve of the South German States to cast in their lot with Prussia and their North German brethren, and to range their armies under the Prussian standards. Most unjust outbursts of wrath and fury followed as a consequence, especially against Baden; the rulers of that state were accused of having distributed explosive bullets to the soldiers, contrary to the international agreements concerning the rights of war; and Baden was informed that her country would be devastated from end to end, as the Palatinate had been by Louis XIV; nobody would be spared, not even the women. The Germans had fair warning of what they had to expect from the French troops even then assembling in Strassburg and lower Alsace, many of whom came from Algiers and made no secret of their lust for blood and booty.

Baden was in immediate contact with the soil of France at Kehl, by the railway bridge over the Rhine. The principal pier of this bridge was blown up by the Badeners on the 22nd of July, expressly as a reply to these threats. "No nation," says Thomas Carlyle, "ever possessed so bad a neighbour as the Germans had in France, for the last four centuries; insolent, greedy, insatiable, irreconcilable and incessantly aggressive." ³

¹ The battle of Dennewitz, won on Sept. 6th, 1813, under Gen. Bülow against Marshal Ney, chiefly by the newly raised Prussian levies, the first trained under the short service system. [*Trs.*]

² The battle of Leipzig, won by the allies against Napoleon, on 16th, 17th and 18th of October, 1813, which practically decided the fate of Napoleon. [*Trs.*]

³ Letter to the "Times", July, 1870.

On July 23, being the 8th day of mobilisation, began the transport of the troops along the different lines of rail from the points of assembly to the several places on the French frontier assigned to the three armies. Day and night the trains hastened to the termini, returning empty to receive fresh soldiers and all that belonged to them. The plans silently worked out beforehand for years, were carried out to the hour and minute without rest or intermission. And now began the second part of the work of mobilisation: the designed concentration on the frontier of the several army-corps and of the armies. On that day also the officers in high command began actively to exercise their authority.

It was a great achievement that was carried out by the lines of railway. Every disposable conveyance was put in requisition to despatch these huge masses of troops, horses, guns, ammunition, provisions, etc. A number of luggage-vans were fitted with benches for the conveyance of men. Down came the battalions, their



TRANSPORT OF TROOPS.

bands playing through the streets, accompanied by fathers, brothers, mothers, wives, girls and children. Now they halt at the station: one more pressure of the hand, one more kiss, one long embrace—and all crowd into the carriages; sausages and hams are handed in, the trumpet sounds, the engine whistles, and with roaring cheers, not unaccompanied by many a tear, the train is off. For many days we are on the way. By day the midsummer sun scorches, and by night one hardly feels one's limbs; at last one arrives half racked at the terminus, the knapsack is buckled on; "Slope arms!" and away we march westward to meet the foe. ¹

On the 31st of July King William joined the army and assumed the supreme command. The three German Armies were placed in line without any check or hindrance whatever.

On the contrary, after the noisy demonstrations on the declaration of the war, a startling silence had fallen on the land west of the frontier; a silence which gave rise to all sorts of conjectures.

On the 31st July the German Armies stood, or were marching, somewhat as follows: The two armies on the right and left wings, the First and Third Armies, had been pushed forward towards the hostile frontier, whilst the bulk of the Second Army, south of Mayence, was still furthest to the rear. Of the First Army, the VIIth corps had moved south of Treves towards Saarlouis, and the VIIIth Corps was advancing from Wittlich and Bernkastel towards the River Saar. Along this river there were small posts from Rehlingen as far as Saarbrücken, and this line of posts was continued eastwards through the Palatinate, past St. Ingbert, Blieskastel, Zweibrücken (Deux

¹ Military engineers took charge of the trains; not a single accident, block or contretemps of any kind occurred during the transport of all these men. [*Trs.*]

Ponts) and Pirmasens. Here the region of the Third Army began. It, like the First, was posted along the frontier, viz., the IInd Bavarian Corps at Neustadt, Annweiler and Bergzabern; the Vth Corps at Landau; the XIth Corps at Germersheim; the Ist Bavarian Corps at Spier; the Württemberg and Baden Divisions at Graben and Karlsruhe. Of the Second Army, that of the centre, the most advanced were the IVth Corps and the Guards at Dürkheim and Frankenthal, the other corps were more towards the rear, near Mayence.

News about the positions of the French forces were still very scanty. Now we know with what haste and precipitation the troops had been from the very first day of mobilisation hurried forward to the frontier when they were still on their peace footing, without waiting for reserves or their manifold requisites. The natural process of mobilisation was actually reversed in Paris; the second stage, viz., the assembling of the troops on the frontier was taken first; and now they demanded that the unprepared regiments should complete themselves on the frontier and should there be supplied with all their necessities.

The newly appointed commanders, the multitudes of men on furlough and in the reserve from all parts went in search of their regiments without being able to find them; varying information was supplied them; they crossed and again missed each other, and at last coming too late they found their regiments at some most unexpected place. The same happened with the transport of horses, ammunition, all sorts of provisions, and supplies for the magazines. Some of their regiments at the battle of Wörth had not yet received their reserves.

In the French camp and among the French government there was no lack of warning voices raised against meeting the well-regulated and fully appointed German troops with unready regiments, with empty magazines and empty war-chests. But the population of France, especially that of Paris, had already become most impatient; the Great Revolution, they said, and Napoleon I also, had crossed the frontier with armies not properly supplied; let the forces but burst in upon Germany, where everything would soon be supplied; for everywhere, wherever they marched on the banks of the Rhine, of the Weser, of the Elbe they would find the traces of their fathers.

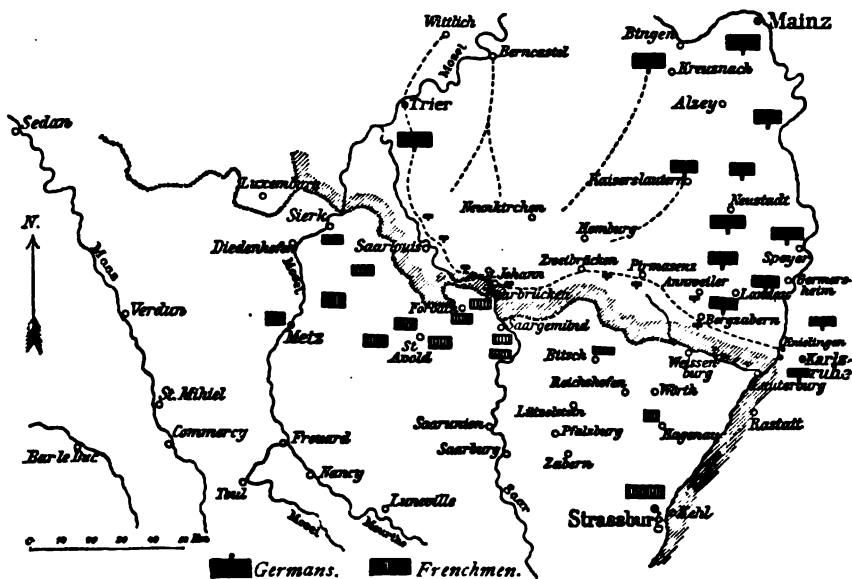
In order to dazzle the eyes of men with a speedy success, eight army-corps were at once collected along the German frontier, partly in scattered positions, partly in close concentration: the right wing at Belfort, the left at Sierck and Diedenhofen (Thionville) on the Moselle—a curve of enormous extension. On the 31st of July the VIIth French Corps stood at Belfort; the Ist Corps at Strassburg, with one Division at Hagenau; the Vth Corps at Saargemünd (Saarguemines) with one Division at Bitsch; the IInd Corps at Forbach, close to the frontier at Saarbrücken, behind it the IIIrd Corps at St. Avold, and the Guards somewhat further to the rear, near Metz; to the left of these the IVth Corps at Bouzonville and Sierck, and the VIth Corps at Chalons.

It strikes the observer at once that the great masses of the French army were crowded together on the line Metz—Saarbrücken. Nearest to the foe stood the Divisions at Hagenau, Bitsch and Forbach. From the very first day nobody in the French camp was in doubt about victory; they burnt with impatience to be led across the border, in order to bowl over the despised enemy at the first rush, and to send news of victory to Paris. An eye-witness who had seen both armies in the last days of July, writes:

"Here, among the Germans, there is everywhere exemplary order; clear, calm, circumspect rule and full consciousness of the gravity of circumstances, and yet all the eagerness for combat of a youthful army; but nowhere the intoxication of that forward assurance of victory, which is hurling the French army to its destruction."

On the 28th of July Napoleon had arrived in Metz to assume the supreme command. The original plans for his expedition against Prussia, which had long been formed, were of a type very different from those actually carried out, and were intended far more thoroughly to determine the fate of Europe. The Rhine was to have been crossed by the French army about the neighbourhood of Karlsruhe; its objectives were to be Karlsruhe, Stuttgart and München (Munich).

Having made sure of the coöperation, or at least of the neutrality of the South German States, the Great War against Prussia was next to begin. Austria and Italy



POSITION OF THE TWO ARMIES ON 31ST JULY.

were to join in when these first successes had been secured. In all their schemes and plans French statesmen were possessed by the fixed idea that their armies were destined to free South Germany from the Prussian yoke. Now came upon them the disillusion, the recognition of the true state of things and the upsetting of all their arrangements: All South Germany was found to a man enthusiastically ranged on the side of Prussia.

"We are receiving," cried the Paris papers, "the saddest and most regrettable news from Munich," when they heard of the mobilisation in Bavaria. The original plans were no longer possible. This may perchance partially explain the wild haste, the chaotic cross-movements of the transport of troops at the beginning. After the 1st of August it became necessary to decide whether the concentration of French troops along the line of operations, Metz—Forbach, was to be taken advantage of to

make a forcible irruption into German territory, possibly taking Mayence as an objective, or whether it was already clearly necessary to fall back into a defensive attitude in consequence of insufficient and defective preparation.

Thirty years previously, in 1840, defence of the Rhine had also been in question, and the Prussian Minister of War was able to declare that, within six weeks after the declaration of war, Prussia would have 200,000 men on the march. Now, on the 31st of July, incomparably greater things had been achieved: on the 8th day of mobilisation the troops were ready to march, and on the 16th day they stood on the enemy's frontier in exemplary order and in superior numbers. Such were the fruits of the labours carried out with German method and thoroughness by King William, Roon and Moltke. To the astonishment of the world the most peaceable of all nations now was in brilliant armour, invincible.

Dazzled by the assurance of undoubted victories, the French had formed no conception of the mighty masses assembling beyond their borders, nor how near they were, and how well equipped, nor of the thousands and thousands that were still coming on.

* * *

Ever since the days of the Great Revolution and the First Empire, the French had been accustomed not to be kept too long in suspense about such news from the seat of war, as would astonish the world and flatter their own vanity. This the French were wont to regard,

not as mere vainglory, not as mere amusement; no, the soothing gratification flowing from successes gained over other nations was held to be a French prerogative, a just claim, necessary to keep the "Grande Nation" in good temper and preserve its natural amiability. Successes in Algiers, in Mexico, in the Indo-Chinese peninsula, were of no account, were mere makeshifts. Humiliation of the Prussians, who had lately filled the world with their glory, this it was that the spoiled children of "La Gloire" craved for, and in addition it was an opportunity for cementing more firmly the loose joints of the throne of the Napoleons with the blood of the foreigner. With trembling impatience they looked forward to the first news of victory. But, meanwhile, they had to content themselves with interminable declamations in the press, in the tribune and in the camp.

And yet the Emperor and his young son had already been for some days in the camp. It must have been evident to any expert, that the state of the troops forbade any immediate enterprise on a large scale. In the first days, immediately after the declaration of war, it might have been possible to occupy a portion of the enemy's territory with the troops that had been hastily moved to the front, and to have spread some confusion. But the time had been allowed to slip by without profit, and the armies lay inactive on the frontier.

If a campaign is entered upon, without either a comprehensive plan, or troops



sufficiently prepared, and yet it is still desirable to pretend that a plan on a grand scale is being carried out, an obvious expedient exists in the form of a strong reconnoitring expedition. They were aware at the French headquarters, that Prussian outposts in strength not sufficiently known, were stationed on the right bank of the River Saar, from Saarbrücken downwards past Völklingen as far as Saarlouis.

As a matter of fact, all the advanced Prussian posts along the Saar had been placed under the command of General Count von Gneisenau, whilst Lieutenant-Colonel von Pestel had, from the day of the declaration of war, kept watch in Saarbrücken; facing the hostile forces with one battalion and two squadrons, taking care all the time, by unwearied activity, to produce the impression that a much larger force was at hand. In the first days of August there were in Saarbrücken and its immediate neighbourhood, the 40th Regiment of Fusiliers with one battery, two squadrons of Uhlans and one squadron of Hussars; of these the second battalion of Fusiliers occupied the heights at Saarbrücken on the left bank as well as the parade-ground; the Uhlans patrolled and the rest of the troops were in a supporting position near Raschpfuhl, 3 to 4 kilometers¹ north of Saarbrücken, along the road leading northwards in the direction of Lebach, towards the line of approach of the VIIIth Corps.

On the 2nd of August Napoleon designed to carry out a grand enterprise. A part of his Vth Corps crossed over to the right bank of the Saar at Saargemünd (Saarguemines); one Division of Bazaine's Corps advanced towards Völklingen; but the chief blow was to be struck by two Divisions of Frossard's Corps at Saarbrücken, in the centre.

At 10 o'clock in the forenoon the Prussian outposts stationed south of Saarbrücken, on the Nussberg and Winterberg and on the parade-ground, reported that strong masses of the enemy were advancing. Two companies of the 40th Fusilier Regiment were always held in readiness, and these at once occupied the line of outposts with two guns from the battery stationed at Raschpfuhl. Everywhere they succeeded in engaging for the necessary time the far more numerous hostile skirmishers. In front the French skirmishers here and there were checked, but soon our men perceived that they would be surrounded, and the companies had to retreat through Saarbrücken to the bridges leading over the Saar to St. Johann. General Gneisenau had from the parade-ground superintended the fight and had taken precautions betimes, that the reserve stationed at Raschpfuhl should be ready to receive the troops as they fell back, and accordingly the retreat before an enemy of tenfold strength was carried out in perfect order. At noon firing ceased on both sides. But several French batteries of artillery and one battery of mitrailleuses were drawn up, and with their fire from the heights they dominated the whole field of action south of Saarbrücken. At two o'clock in the afternoon the Prussians evacuated Saarbrücken and St. Johann in order to concentrate at Raschpfuhl. Slowly the French followed, without at first crossing the Saar. Towards evening General Gneisenau marched off northwards with his detachment, so as to be nearer to the First Army, and bivouacked at Hilschbach. On the other threatened points along the Saar, both above and below Saarbrücken, nothing of importance had happened. In this fight the Germans lost in dead and wounded, 4 officers and 79 men; the French lost 6 officers and 80 men.

¹ A kilometer = 5 furlongs very nearly. [*Trs.*]

But the Paris papers announced: "Our army has assumed the offensive, has crossed the frontier and occupied Prussian territory. In spite of the strength of the enemy's position a few of our battalions were sufficient to take the heights, and our artillery speedily drove the enemy out of the town. The dash of our troops was so remarkable that our losses were insignificant. The Emperor was present during the engagement, and the Prince Imperial received his baptism of fire on the first field of battle. At 4 o'clock the Emperor returned to Metz."

Whilst the Prussian troops were thus guarding the frontiers, and the French were abandoning themselves to joy over the first victory and the capture of the first German town, and experts alone understood that that reconnaissance was but a blow in the air,—whilst all this was happening, on the same 2nd of August King William arrived with the Grand Head Quarters in Mayence and issued the following order:

"TO MY ARMY,

"All Germany stands together under arms against a neighbouring state, which has without excuse declared war against us. We must defend our threatened fatherland, our honour, our hearths and homes. To-day I assume the supreme command over the united armies and confidently begin a struggle such as our fathers in former days brought to a glorious end.

"The whole nation relies, as I do, on you. God the Lord will be with our just cause.

"WILLIAM."

It was now the duty of the German Headquarters to introduce unity into the movements of the three Armies, so that they might support each other and so that their efforts might be directed to one great end. This applied especially to the First and Second Armies, because, owing to the peculiar distribution of the hostile forces, a larger measure of independence was necessarily allowed to the Third Army.

The First Army had received orders to be assembled by the 3rd of August along the line Losheim—Wadern. The news of the fight at Saarbrücken hastened their advance. Already by the evening of the 2nd of August part of the First Army was drawn up to the south of the above line. On August 3rd General von Steinmetz received the following telegram from the Grand Head Quarters: "The First Army is, on the 4th of August, to be concentrated at Tholey. From the hesitating advance of the French it is to be inferred that on August 6th the Second Army will be able to assemble in advance of the forest zone at Kaiserslautern. The Third Army will on August the 4th cross the frontier at Weissenburg. An offensive movement all along the line is intended." This order was the basis of the immediate operations of all the armies.

On the evening of August 4th the First and Second Armies came in touch at St. Wendel, Ottweiler and Neunkirchen. The two columns made a concentric advance towards the Saar at Saarbrücken as soon as their leading files had issued from the mountainous district they had been traversing. The principal aim of the Commander-in-Chief was to connect the First Army, which was still weak, with the Second Army, lest it should be unduly exposed whilst isolated. General von Steinmetz for his part was anxious to retain as independent a position as possible in the theatre of war, and to draw upon himself the attention of the enemy.

Meanwhile the Third Army had assembled in the Bavarian Palatinate and had received information from the outposts along the Franco-Bavarian frontier. A bold reconnoitring ride carried out by the Württemberg captain, Count Zeppelin, on July 24th, had brought information from personal observation that there were but feeble posts of the enemy along the frontier. Other reports from Bavarian, Prussian and Baden outposts proved the presence of two hostile squadrons in Seltz on the Rhine etc. By the 1st of August the impression prevailed, that the enemy, conscious of his own unreadiness, had abandoned all offensive movements, and was awaiting a battle behind the River Saar.

The Germans found Weissenburg still unoccupied on August 2nd, but during the 3rd of August troops were reported to be moving thither, whilst the two squadrons previously noticed were still in occupation of Seltz. From the news received up to the 3rd of August it was impossible to form a clear idea of the enemy's positions and intended movements. It was believed that the 1st French Corps was south of Hagenau, the Vth at Bitsch. The events of the 3rd of August determined the movements of the Third Army. On that day the whole army was assembled on the left bank of the Rhine; and it had been ready to strike even on August 2nd. On the road leading from Landau to Weissenburg by Bergzabern stood the most advanced Division, that of Count Bothmer of the IIInd Bavarian Corps; a few kilometers behind it the Vth and XIth Corps, the rest of the IIInd, and the 1st Bavarian Corps. The 4th Cavalry Division was at Landau; the Württembergers and the Badeners, united to form Werder's Corps, were stationed at Hagenbach. On the evening of the 3rd of August the German outposts extended from the mountains to the Rhine, along the Otterbach, their most outlying posts being rather less than 2000 paces to the north of Weissenburg.

Thus was successfully accomplished as a foretaste and promise of future victory, the first task of the German Army: the work of mobilisation in the garrisons, the true workshops for the manufacture of fit warlike instruments; the transport of the troops to their several places of assembly, and finally, during the time between the events at Saarbrücken and, in the case of the Third Army, the 3rd of August, in that of the First and Second Armies, the 5th of August,—their array before the enemy, ready to deal effective blows. Everything had been carried out, whilst the Head Quarters of the enemy were still groping in uncertainty and were endeavouring to devise some new scheme to replace the original plan of campaign against South Germany, which had already failed.

CHAPTER II

WEISSENBURG

By MAJOR-GENERAL ALBERT PFISTER, PH. D.

AFTER the troops had left for the frontier, a deep silence, full of anxious expectation, hung over Germany, her cities and villages. All looked forward with resignation to the solemn hours for which they were prepared. There was no family, high or low, that had not at least one of its members with the army. But they did not allow their hands to rest idly in their laps; the clock-work with its accurate mechanism, having finished the first part of its task, worked steadily on. Landwehrmen and Reserves went through their courses of retraining; Freiwillige were drilled, so as to be able to depart early for the army, to fill up the gaps. Everything was made ready for the care of the sick and wounded. Volunteer associations of nurses and attendants were formed, to send help wherever wounded and mutilated men should be left on the ground. As sisters of mercy, as deaconesses, as knights of St. John, or of Malta, as volunteer attendants at the hospitals, the sons and daughters of the people came in shoals, without distinction of rank, to take service under the Red Cross, and under this badge there were deeds of heroism that are worthy to be set beside those done on the field of battle. Between the army, the field and the friends at home trains plied to and fro, the posts flew, the telegraphs were busy, so as to keep all united, and to guide this uprising of the people, with the force and weight of a common purpose that had been well reasoned out beforehand; to keep up communications, and exchange words of confidence and mutual trust.

The Crown Prince Frederick William, the Commander of the Third Army, had arrived at his headquarters at Speier (Spies) on the 30th of July, and on the following day he gave his hearty greeting to the troops, who had joined him from every part of Germany. The inhabitants of the Palatinate looked upon the assembling German warriors as real deliverers in their hour of need; for all the news from the enemy, that had come to hand, justified their anxiety for property, honour and life. Was it not well known, that France had at first intended to flood Germany with her African mercenaries. When the pastor of Fröschweiler¹ first caught sight of this black and brown tag-rag mob, in whose faces callousness and bestiality disputed precedence, he exclaimed: "Oh woe! fair-haired maidenhood of Germany! where these fellows burst in, howling and lamentation will attend them."

The river at the frontier, the Lauter, separated the two armies. North of it, as we have already seen, the Third Army was in position; south of it lay parts of the

¹ At the time here referred to Fröschweiler was French soil, and the pastor was a French subject. [*Trs*]

Ist French Corps, under the command of Marshal MacMahon. This Corps consisted of four Divisions; three at Strassburg, the second at Hagenau, under the command of General Abel Douay. On his right MacMahon was in touch with the VIIIth Corps at Belfort, on his left with the Vth Corps of General de Failly at Bitsch and Saargemünd.

At his headquarters at Strassburg MacMahon had been informed by Marshal Le Boeuf from Metz, that very numerous hostile forces were assembling in the Palatinate, and he was instructed to concentrate his own troops on the roads leading from Hagenau and Sulz, by Wörth and Fröschweiler, to Bitsch. Thus MacMahon was

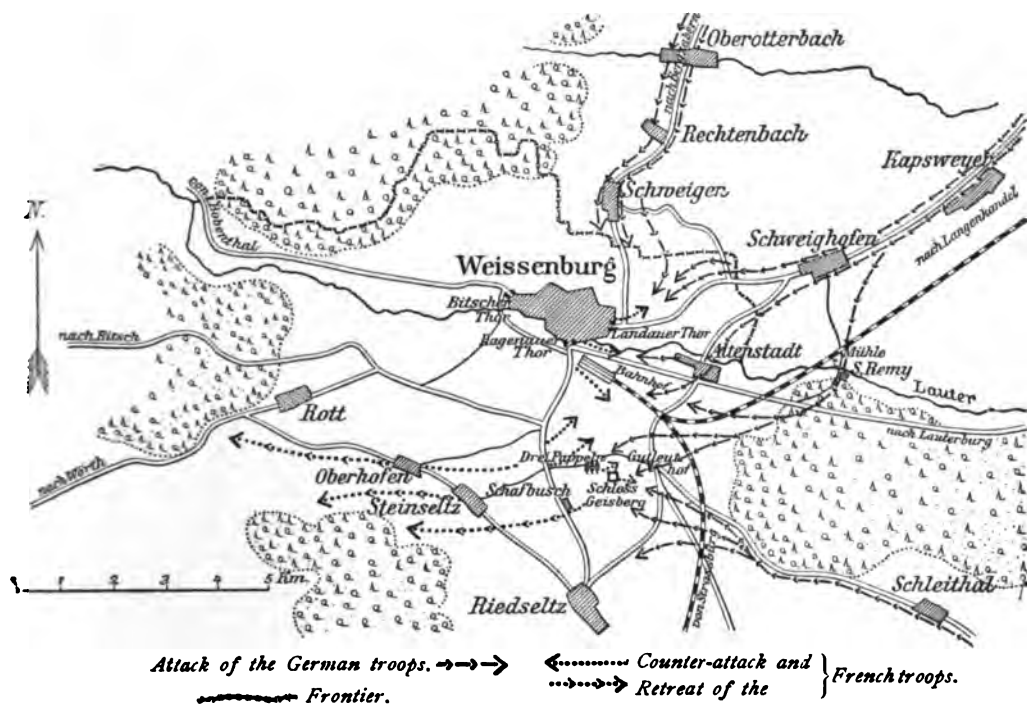


THE CROWN PRINCE OF PRUSSIA.

virtually ordered to hold the heights of Fröschweiler. On the night of the 3/4 August he was with his headquarters and one division in Hagenau; two divisions were stationed in Reichshofen, and one division, that of General Douay, was pushed forward to Weissenburg.

The town of Weissenburg, once a fortress, is situated where the valley of the Lauter, issuing from the mountains, widens out and, gradually gaining in width, extends eastwards into the plain of the Rhine. To the west, high mountains, densely wooded, close in the valley; to the north rises the height called Schweigen, to the south is the hill called the Geisberg, both towering considerably above the little town and the valley.

On the evening of the 3rd of August they were still unaware at the French Headquarters how near and how overwhelmingly powerful the German troops in the Palatinate were. It was already somewhat late in the evening when General Abel Douay arrived with his troops, consisting of eight battalions, eight squadrons and 18 pieces of artillery, at the Geisberg, south of Weissenburg; the town itself was occupied by one battalion. Thus this General had gained an excellent defensive position; the old town surrounded by ramparts with strong towers over the gates and drawbridges; round about the town a pretty broad moat, which, though not everywhere filled with water, still rendered the walls safe from assault; the Geisberg to the south-east of the



town was difficult for an enemy to scale, and commanding, as it did, a wide range, it was difficult to turn it.

On the evening of August 3rd General Douay inspected the town, and received intelligence from the sous-préfet, Hepp, who was exceptionally on the alert. He asserted that there were fully 80,000 men facing the French; but he did not seem to know how very near they were, for he promised the General that he would pay him on the morrow a visit in his camp, accompanied by the ladies of his family. These enterprising visitors actually entered their carriage early in the morning of the 4th August to go from Weissenburg to the Geisberg, when the first gun-shot thundered over the town, and soon afterwards a hail of shells rattled down over the Hagenau gate.

Soon after his arrival at Speier the Crown Prince received orders from the Grand Head Quarters to advance to the attack as soon as his army was assembled. The

order received on the 3rd of August ran thus: "It is intended to carry out a general offensive movement; the Third Army is to cross the frontier to-morrow, at Weissenburg." So be it! Away then into France!

We have seen above, that on the evening of the 3rd of August the various Divisions of the Third Army were drawn up along the road leading from Landau, past Bergzabern, to Weissenburg; in all 128 battalions, 102 squadrons and 80 batteries. A further Division of Cavalry, the 2nd, and the VIth Corps were soon to follow as a reinforcement. The order issued from the Head Quarters at Landau ran as follows: "It is my intention to advance to-morrow as far as the River Lauter and to pass it with the van-guard."

The different columns had, moreover, their routes and objectives pointed out to them. The Bavarian Division (Bothmer) was to be in advance, moving on Weissenburg



GENERAL ABEL DOUAY.

and endeavouring to take the town; the Vth Corps to cross the Lauter below Weissenburg, near St. Remy, and push outposts forward to the opposite heights; the XIth Corps to cross the Lauter on the left of the Vth, through the Bienwald wood, and then act as ordered for the Vth; Werder's Corps to move on Lauterburg. The other parts of the army received similar instructions. The order of the Crown Prince concludes with the words: "I myself shall be during the forenoon on the heights between Kapsweyer and Schweigen."

Early in the morning, at 6 o'clock, the 4th Bavarian Division (Count Bothmer) started from Bergzabern for Oberotterbach and Schweigen, on the way to Weissenburg. Their vanguard had reached the heights south of Schweigen. The French outposts had fallen back on the town; the walls and the Geisberg to the south were seen to be held by troops. Accordingly

the battery of the advanced guard was planted on a height south of Schweigen, which dominated the field, and opened fire against the enceinte of Weissenburg.

General Douay could not, with his feeble division, undertake the direct defence of the long line Weissenburg—Altenstadt, and further down along the River Lauter; he had to content himself with occupying the town with one battalion, which afterwards was reinforced by the 1st Regiment of Turcos, who held the railway-station: all the other troops he kept together on the Geisberg position. The first shot was fired soon after 8 o'clock; at a quarter-past 9 the Crown Prince appeared with the chief of his staff, General von Blumenthal, on the height of Schweigen; at one o'clock the town was taken by the Bavarians and Prussians, at 2 o'clock the Geisberg was taken by storm and the first victory in the great war was won. At 8 o'clock in the evening King William received in Mayence the telegram: "Brilliant, but bloody victory won under my eyes by the storming of Weissenburg and the Geisberg behind it, by the regiments of the Vth, XIth and IInd Bavarian Corps. French Division (Douay) repulsed



L. Braun.

{face p. 76.

ASSAULT OF THE BAVARIANS THROUGH THE VINEYARDS OF WEISSENBURG.

and disorganised, abandoning their encampments. General Douay killed. More than 500 unwounded prisoners and one gun in our hands.—Frederick William."

On the evening of the 4th the news arrived in Berlip and in all German towns. With exultation the news was passed from lip to lip. At 10 o'clock at night a telegram arrived in Munich from Marienburg in West Prussia: "The faithful German brothers in Marienburg send a thundering Hurrah to their Bavarian brothers-in-arms."

Soon the various incidents and the course of the battle became known.—The Bavarian battery on the height of Schweigen opened fire on the 4th of August at 8 o'clock in the morning. The French were completely taken by surprise. At 5 o'clock in the morning General Douay had sent out a reconnoitring party, but the detachment returned without having perceived anything of the advance of the enemy, and every one in the camp and on the Geisberg began his work for the day without misgiving. The first gunshots took the troops completely by surprise. The 1st Regiment of Turkos and one battery started for the railway-station; the two other batteries at 9 o'clock opened fire against the Bavarians from the summit of the Geisberg.

General Count Bothmer, who saw that the ramparts of the town being safe from assault could not be taken by a coup-de-main, determined to protract the contest and await reinforcements. From Bergzabern in the north, the 3rd Bavarian Division was coming up; on the left, down in the valley of the Lauter, the Vth Prussian Corps was momentarily expected, and still further to the left the XIth would appear. At 10 o'clock the combatants became aware that the Vth Corps had joined in the fight; it had been advancing from Schweighofen to Altenstadt and had crossed the Lauter at St. Remy, together with other forces. Somewhat earlier the XIth Corps had crossed the Lauter lower down and had got as far as Schleithal, where it found itself almost behind the French position on the Geisberg. It moved against the eastern slopes by way of Gutleuthof and towards Riedseltz.

By 11 o'clock then, very superior forces had deployed against the front and right flank of the isolated French Division; the nature of the ground certainly was still favourable to the defenders, but their situation had become critical. Soon after 10 o'clock General Douay had resolved slowly to fall back; it seems that then he fell, before he was able to make the necessary arrangements for effecting a retreat.

At 12 o'clock, the head of the Vth Corps, viz., the 58th and 47th Regiments, and



GENERAL V. KIRCHBACH.

the 5th battalion of Jägers succeeded, after a fierce resistance, in capturing the railway-station; soon afterwards Bavarian and Prussian artillery burst open the Landau gate. Here the Bavarians entered; the Prussians entered through the Hagenau gate and the third gate, that of Bitsch, was held by a Bavarian detachment; the defenders of the town, 18 officers and 340 men, saw themselves cut off, and had to surrender. A part of the day's work was done. There remained yet the Geisberg, on the eastern slope of which were the most advanced detachments of the Vth and XIth Corps.

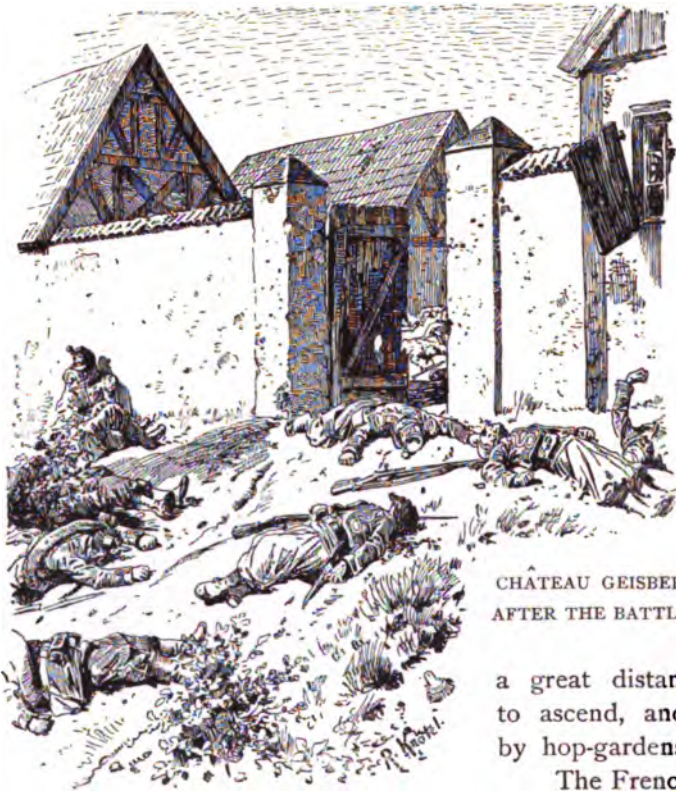
The defenders of the Geisberg had been reinforced by such detachments as had saved themselves by rapid retreat from the railway-station. At noon there were on

the Geisberg seven battalions, three batteries and the cavalry brigade belonging to the division at Riedseltz; all under the command of General Pellé, the next senior General after General Douay.

The Château Geisberg formed the main point of support for the defence of the position; a massively constructed mass of buildings, surrounded by a wall 15 ft. high and pierced by loop-holes. But the château is not built on the summit of the hill; it is overlooked by a knoll to the west of it, which is distinguished by three poplars, visible from a great distance. The slopes are difficult to ascend, and the difficulties are increased by hop-gardens, vineyards and gardens.

The French falling back from the railway-station to the Geisberg were pursued by two companies of the 58th Regiment and one

company of Jägers. Thanks to their eagerness and contempt of death, they succeeded in taking between the railway-station and the Geisberg the first French gun, and in retaining it despite the repeated and energetic charges of the French. General von Kirchbach, the commander of the Vth Corps, now himself led the attack against the summit of the Geisberg. In the centre was placed the 7th Regiment of the King's Grenadiers, to their right two battalions of the 59th Regiment, and to these were joined portions of the 58th and 47th Regiments and of the 5th battalion of Jägers. To the left of the King's Grenadiers the foremost troops of the XIth Corps, the 80th and 87th Regiments, joined in the struggle. The centre and the left wing of this line of attack were directed against the Château Geisberg, the right wing against the high ground near the three poplars.

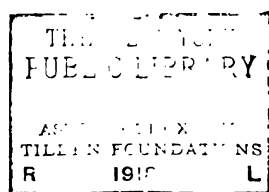


CHÂTEAU GEISBERG
AFTER THE BATTLE.



CHÂTEAU GEISBERG.

(face p. 78).



They advanced to the attack with colours flying and beating drums. The enemy was quickly driven out of the gardens that surrounded the château, but as soon as the skirmishers tried to close on the château itself they were received by an overwhelming musketry-fire from the buildings, which were occupied up to the roof; the Germans therefore sought cover behind embankments or underfeatures. Major von Kaisenberg with the greater part of the battalion of Fusiliers of the King's Regiment of Grenadiers, however, advanced to attack the strong building. At every step the losses increased; the standard-bearer fell, then the Major seized the Colours and fell pierced by three balls; the standard passed on from hand to hand as the bearers fell; unweariedly the brave troops followed their bold leaders, but soon were struck down. Against this storm-proof building no success was possible; the most manly courage was of no avail; close pressed against unflanked walls, the men tried to find cover. This eager competition between officers, non-commissioned officers, lance-corporals and privates became a feature of the whole war.

They tried to turn the château, and called for artillery. General von Kirchbach, who was in the immediate neighbourhood of the gardens which surround the building, had ordered up several batteries, and the hitherto unconquered walls quickly felt their effect. However, no decisive effect was secured till the right wing of the line of attack had taken the height near the three poplars, and thence bombarded the château. It was 2 in the afternoon when the remnant of the defenders, 200 in number, had to surrender. A little earlier General von Kirchbach had been wounded in the neck by a musket-ball.

By the time the château fell, the rest of the French troops were already in full retreat. They moved in a south-west direction in order to reach the outskirts of the neighbouring woods. They vainly tried, for the last time, at the Schafbusch farmhouse to make a stand against the XIth Corps. At 2 o'clock the Crown Prince arrived and congratulated the troops on their first victory on French soil, and the enthusiasm of the soldiers was unbounded. In a small room lay the body of the French Commander; his German conqueror, deeply moved, visited it and paid his meed of respect. At first some pursuit of the enemy was contemplated, but between 2 and 3 o'clock the infantry pursuit was stopped, and only the divisional cavalry followed as far as Sulz. The troops then began to settle down in the places assigned them; in and about Weissenburg, at Altenstadt, on the Geisberg and in its neighbourhood; outposts were placed in the direction of Bitsch and Hagenau. The bivouac fires lit up the neighbourhood far into the night.

The total loss the Germans had to bewail, was: 91 officers and 1460 men; of these 16 officers and 347 men were Bavarians. The greatest losses were sustained by the King's Grenadier Regiment, which lost 23 officers and 329 men; the 1st battalion of the 58th Regiment, which lost 12 officers and 165 men; and the 10th battalion of the Bavarian Jägers, whose losses amounted to 3 officers and 115 men. Death had reaped his awful harvest principally among the officers; this was the persistent feature throughout our great war, from the first shot to the last. Among the 80 dead on the slope of the Geisberg there lay 10 officers.

According to the latest report the loss of the French amounted to 2300 men, inclusive of the prisoners.

On the very next day after the battle the expectant German people were able

to receive news from eye-witnesses. The "Staatsanzeiger" ¹ wrote: "Whilst the town of Weissenburg was being attacked on one flank by the 47th and 58th Regiments, the King's Grenadier Regiment, No. 7, made a brilliant attack on the bastion-like Geisberg. Here a battery of mitrailleuses was placed, which from a great distance hurled its rattling volleys against the storming party, without, however, causing any serious losses. This battery evidently did not produce the effect expected by the enemy, and even the murderous quick firing of the troops from the château and the vineyards, did not break up the storming party."—"Although this fight on the Weissenburg lines was only a collision between the advanced guards of the two armies, yet the success of the day has, under the circumstances and at the commencement of the operations, a high moral significance."

In France, in Paris, on Change, the news of Weissenburg aroused most conflicting emotions; some would not believe in defeat, and considered the report of a German victory to be only a new piece of Prussian presumption; others again magnified its importance and spread deep despondency.

"War," wrote the "Saturday Review", "has begun in right earnest, and it is significant in every way that the Germans can boast of the first victory."

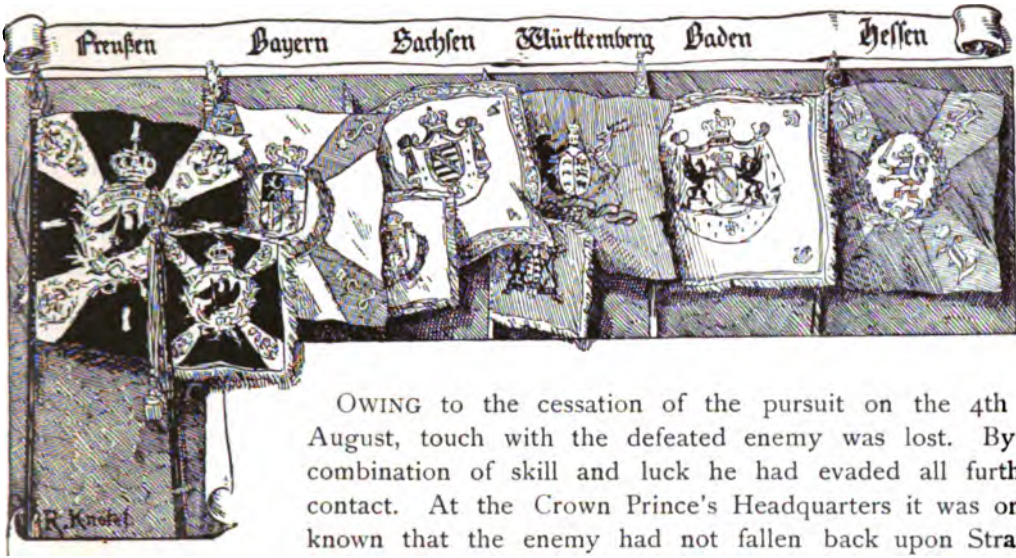
As the Bavarians had taken part in the battle of Weissenburg, United Germany had received its baptism of fire; and, moreover, it was proved that, spite of chassepots and mitrailleuses, the Germans could storm French heights and take French prisoners. That would make the war appear in quite a new light to Frenchmen, who had considered such a thing as quite inconceivable.

¹ "Staatsanzeiger" = Official "Moniteur." [*Trs.*]

CHAPTER III

THE BATTLE OF WÖRTH

By MAJOR-GENERAL ALBERT PFISTER, PH. D.



OWING to the cessation of the pursuit on the 4th of August, touch with the defeated enemy was lost. By a combination of skill and luck he had evaded all further contact. At the Crown Prince's Headquarters it was only known that the enemy had not fallen back upon Strassburg, and that accordingly he must be found either in a due west direction towards Lembach and Bitsch, or south-west towards Wörth and Reichshofen.

The advance on the 2nd of August of General Frossard towards Saarbrücken had obtained no reliable information about the designs of the German army for the French Headquarters at Metz. They could not make up their minds either to take the offensive actively, as was eagerly desired in Paris, or to stand energetically on the defensive. They assumed an expectant attitude. We now know that, between the 2nd and 5th of August, they were hoping in France for some lucky event, or for some blunder on the part of the enemy. Various reports came to hand, each causing most contradictory orders for moving troops or arresting their movements. The same bodies of troops not infrequently received orders in rapid succession to move east, to move west; to halt, to march. There was hesitation, delay, and expectancy under compulsion of dictation of the opposing force. On the 4th of August there arrived the further news of the defeat at Weissenburg. MacMahon had under these circumstances to be reinforced, and the Emperor added two more corps to his command; viz., the VIIth at Belfort and the Vth at Saargemünd and Bitsch. If MacMahon should succeed in concentrating all his forces, viz., the Ist, Vth and VIIth Corps, altogether ten divisions, then he was a match for every opponent.

On the 4th of August, whilst the battle of Weissenburg was still in progress,

MacMahon had already taken his measures in a masterly style. On the evening of that day the divisions of his corps lay for the most part encamped at and near Reichshofen; in the course of August 5th he expected to effect his junction with his right wing, Conseil Dumesnil's Division, which was hurrying up by train from Upper Alsace, via Strassburg and Hagenau; and with his left wing Pellé's Division, formerly Abel Douay's, which was retreating from Weissenburg.

Early on the 5th of August MacMahon had collected his whole 1st Corps with all four divisions at Fröschweiler. At the same time Conseil Dumesnil's Division had reached Hagenau from Mühlhausen; fresh trains continually arrived and went on from Hagenau to Reichshofen. During the night between the 5th and 6th August this whole division reached Reichshofen, and early on the 6th of August it was drawn up at Fröschweiler. Liébert's Division of the VIIth Corps had remained at Mühlhausen,

retained there, as it seems, by the threatening movements of the Germans along the Upper Rhine. A small detachment under Colonel Seubert succeeded by frequent skilful demonstrations along the slopes of the Black Forest, in creating the impression that he intended to cross the Rhine at Markelsheim and Rheinweiler.



MACMAHON.

MacMahon had not yet effected a junction with the Vth French Corps stationed at Bitsch. His intention was to unite with it on the following day, the 6th of August; and it seems that he had planned to attack, on the 7th of August, the right flank of the German army, which was believed to be moving from north to south. The line of railway, Strassburg—Hagenau—Reichshofen—Bitsch, which was exceedingly favourable to MacMahon and was wholly at his disposal, was used for the concentration of his troops during the whole of the 5th of August, the

night between the 5th and the 6th, and during the early morning of the 6th itself, but by noon of the 6th it had not done all it ought to have done. "If it is your intention to fight," said Napoleon I, "not a single battalion that might possibly be brought up, ought to be overlooked." The Bitsch station was not much further from Reichshofen than that of Hagenau, and on the 5th of August MacMahon already knew that he could dispose of the corps there placed.

The Third German Army at Weissenburg had, as we have seen, lost touch of the enemy on the 4th of August; they had no knowledge that French masses were already collected at Reichshofen and Fröschweiler and that a further concentration was going on. Under these circumstances the following orders for the Third Army were issued for August the 5th, from the Headquarters of the Crown Prince: "The army will tomorrow, August 5th, continue its march towards Strassburg." In detail: "The cavalry will reconnoitre as far as Hagenau, Wörth, Reichshofen; the IInd Bavarian Corps

(Hartmann) will move westward along the Bitsch road as far as Lembach; the Vth Corps in a more south-westerly direction towards Wörth, as far as Preuschdorf; the XIth Corps will face due south in the neighbourhood of Sulz, whither the Headquarters of the army will move: the Corps Werder will move to Aschbach; the 1st Bavarian Corps will remain further in rear, as a general reserve."

The reconnaissances of the cavalry began at 5 o'clock in the morning, and reported that at Hagenau the infantry was so massed together that no cavalry could get through; that towards the west, on the steep hills on the right bank of the Sauerbach near Wörth, Fröschweiler and Reichshofen, there were encamped large masses of troops of all arms; that from Hagenau westwards active transport of troops by rail was being carried on.

In the course of the afternoon of August 5th all the Army Corps reached the several places assigned them. The IInd Bavarian Corps came across numerous traces of Pellé's Division which had fallen back from the battle of Weissenburg; the French advanced detachment at Mattstall retreated; and the Bavarian outposts arrived at Mattstall. In the afternoon the Vth Corps which moved on their left had reached Preuschdorf. There they ascertained that Wörth was occupied, and that there were extensive bivouacs at Elsasshausen and Fröschweiler. The outposts of the Vth Corps were at Görsdorf, Dieffenbach and Gunstett, on the rising ground on the left bank of the Sauerbach. All was open to the west of this corps, and they saw that on the heights behind Wörth large masses of the enemy were facing towards the east. The XIth Corps at Sulz, and the others still further to its rear, faced south towards Hagenau and Strassburg.

A closer concentration of the whole Third Army was planned for the 6th of August; the XIth Corps, on the left, was to move close up to the Vth; the 1st Bavarian on the right near the Vth—all were to turn westwards, so that the three corps would be massed close together; and besides these the IInd Bavarian Corps was placed at Mattstall and Lembach on the left flank of the enemy. Werder's Corps alone was to face south to watch the forest of Hagenau.

These arrangements made for the 6th were intended as a preparation for a resolute advance, and at the same time the whole force of the Third Army was to be concentrated and made available within a narrow area, in case more serious events should occur.

"The cavalry of the French army," says one of the latest French reports, "had so completely forgotten the discharge of its proper duties—reporting and covering—that it remained always under the cover of infantry and rested in its bivouac. Accordingly Marshal MacMahon either received no news about the enemy, or such as he did receive was quite unreliable.

Much fuller were the reports of the German cavalry. Nevertheless, on the evening of the 5th of August they seem to have been still unaware of the heavy masses of troops in front of them. They would soon enough show that they were present.

Night fell over the bivouacs at Fröschweiler and Elsasshausen, at Lembach, Preuschdorf and Sulz. The outposts at Mattstall, in the forest of Langensulzbach, along the Sauerbach, remained quiet. At dawn on the 6th of August a shot fell from time to time. It rained incessantly. "It is a strange fact," says a French historian, "that rainy nights like this have always preceded our great defeats from Crecy to Waterloo."

* * *

When a traveller, approaching the little town of Wörth from the east, from Weissenburg, say, or Sulz, reaches the raised plain of the Görsdorf fields and the country to the west of Preuschdorf, he stands on a moderate elevation; right before him lies the valley of the Sauerbach, the meadows of which extend due north and south along the bottom; but on the other side of the valley steep slopes rise before him, right up to the village of Fröschweiler, which is seen on a commanding eminence. To the left of this fine village lies the insignificant hamlet of Elsasshausen, and further to the left a wood is seen, and the ground gradually falls towards the Albrechtshäuser farm and Morsbronn. To his right, in the direction of Nehweiler and Langensulzbach, the view is shut off by steep wooded slopes. At his feet, in the pleasant Sauerbach valley, lies Wörth, and to the left of it Spachbach; on the right bank of the Sauerbach is the road leading from Wörth to Hagenau via Dürrenbach. The roads from Weissenburg and Sulz ascend the valley close to him, and cross it, leading on the other side of the slope up to Fröschweiler, Elsasshausen, Eberbach, Morsbronn, Reichshofen and Gundershofen. Here there rises a gentle undulation, an outlying underfeature of the Vosges mountains, connected with them at Nehweiler and Langensulzbach. Sloping downwards between the Sauerbach and the Falkensteinerbach from north to south, its steepest declivity is to the east, towards the Sauerbach, and its highest elevation is at Nehweiler, Fröschweiler and Elsasshausen.

In these localities the French army found its "points d'appui;" the centre in Fröschweiler and Elsasshausen, the left wing in the two plots of woodland lying immediately to the north of Fröschweiler, with a steep descent towards the forest of Langensulzbach. The right was placed in the Niederwald, south of Elsasshausen, in the Albrechtshäuser farm and in Morsbronn. Behind the position of Fröschweiler and Elsasshausen extends the "Great Forest;" yet further in the direction of Niederbronn, Reichshofen and Gundershofen there is open country crossed by the long line of railway from Hagenau to Bitsch. The vegetation and the conformation of the ground everywhere supply covered and hidden positions for reserves, giving opportunities for breaking out suddenly; moreover, the French artillery had a commanding position at Fröschweiler and Elsasshausen. MacMahon had selected and utilized his position with great skill; its strongest side, viz., that of the steep slopes of Fröschweiler, covered with dense vegetation, was precisely that which fronted eastwards towards the foe, and much the same was the case in the northern direction, towards Langensulzbach and the valley of the Sulzbächl.

The pastor of Fröschweiler had followed attentively the events of the last few days, and had noticed the positions taken up by the French army. He wrote at the time: "The front of the works of defence formed a really formidable bulwark, especially towards the valley of the Sauer. From the northern extremity of our village the spurs running down to the Niederwald form a semicircle of natural fortifications, which command the whole valley of the Sauer as well as the hills which rise on the other side. The spurs end in cone-shaped underfeatures, which are covered all over with vines, and the valleys between them are so blocked up by hop plantations, that it would appear impossible for the enemy to effect an advance or an ascent."

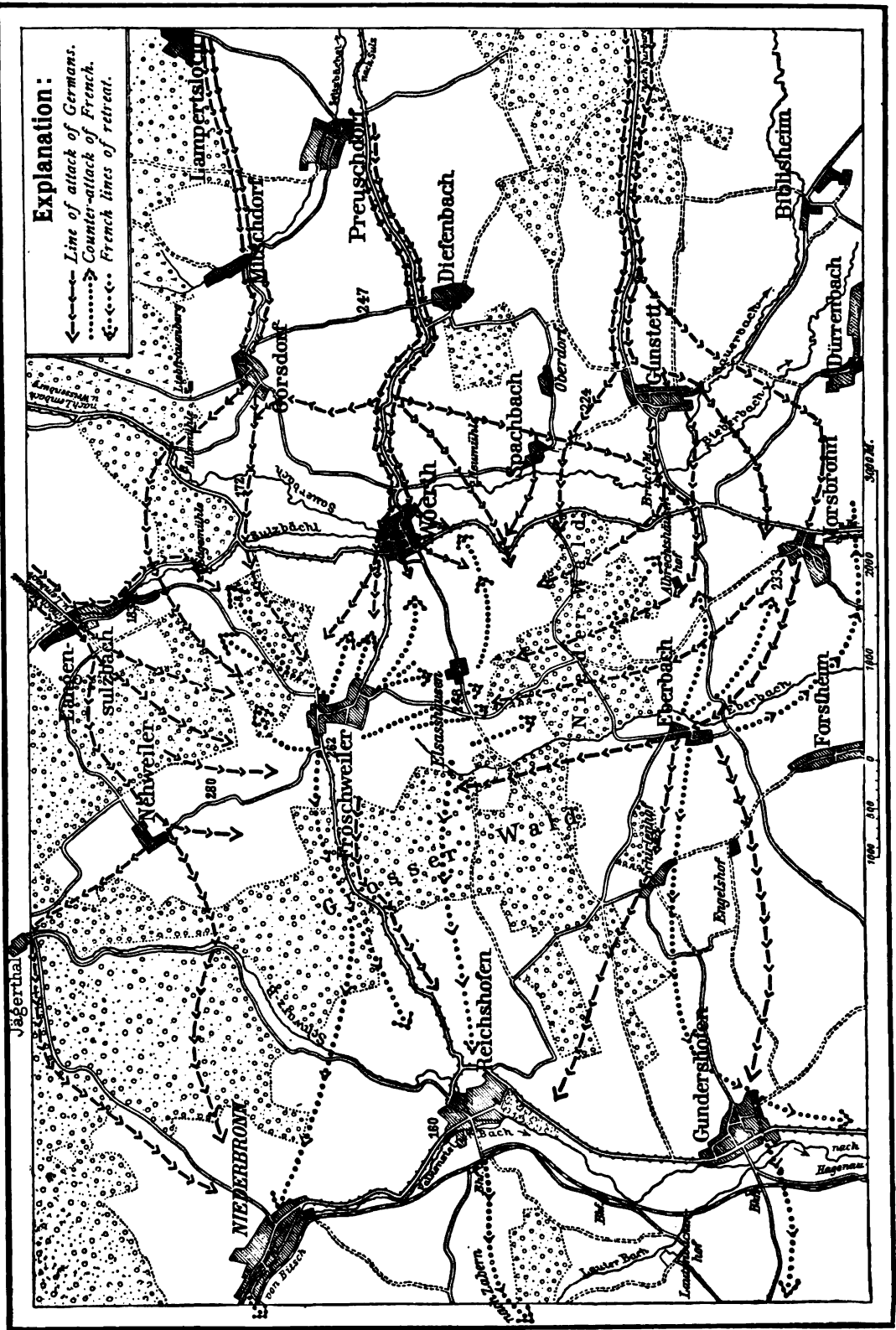
We have seen that, in the rainy night between the 5th and 6th of August, the bivouacs of the French and the Germans were separated by the valley of the Sauerbach. The early morning of August 6th was gloomy. The musketry fire of

the advance-guards and the activity in the French camp increased from hour to hour. The commander of the Prussian advance-guard, having the bulk of his forces at Dieffenbach, sent two battalions supported by a battery, to reconnoitre in the direction of Wörth. Almost at the same time the French attempted an advance towards Gunstett. These early skirmishes between 7 and 8 in the morning led to a series of



ENVIRONS OF WÖRTH, WITH FRÖSCHWEILER.

partial combats, which continued till noon, and had an important effect on each other, but had no common object and no uniform plan. Thence followed interruptions and misconceptions, and, as a final result, the conviction that it was inevitably necessary to act with all the forces at hand. Accordingly the XIth Corps was, whilst on its march, gradually drawn into the conflict, till at last, at one o'clock in the afternoon the real battle began, having a common definite purpose in view. In the beginning only the



BATTLE OF WÜRTHEM.

Vth Corps and the 4th Bavarian Division faced a greatly superior hostile force. The German commanders had intended only to effect on the 6th of August a concentration of forces and a change of front; a serious engagement was to have been avoided, and of this the Crown Prince had repeatedly reminded the commanders on the morning of the 6th. But admonitions and orders were of no avail; the hostile armies stood too near and had come into too close contact with each other; it was too dangerous to leave to the enemy even the mere appearance of a success, and during the forenoon the French had repeatedly more than the mere semblance of an advantage; they might positively have claimed a victory.

The reconnaissance conducted by the commander of the German outposts, had shewn that powerful hostile masses were encamped on the heights to the west of Wörth. This led to an artillery combat, which immediately involved further consequences. To the right of the Vth Corps, which was drawn up on the heights of Dieffenbach and Preuschkorf, the 4th Bavarian Division was held in readiness under orders, known to it alone, to attack the enemy in flank, as soon as artillery fire was heard from the direction of Wörth. The Bavarians acted on their instructions, found Langensulzbach unoccupied, and began to attack the woods north of Fröschweiler, held by the enemy. They were unable to make perceptible progress, mainly because their artillery could do little execution in a woodland country. The enemy had the advantage of position, being on a higher elevation; moreover, the 3rd Bavarian Division was halted at Lembach fronting towards Bitsch.



LIEUTENANT-GENERAL V. BOSE.

Towards the left the thunder of artillery from the reconnoitring contest at Wörth accelerated the march of the XIth Army Corps, which had started early in the morning from its bivouac south of Sulz. The leading portion of the XIth Corps was obliged to support the post at Gunstett, which had been severely attacked. Thus it happened that this corps was also drawn into the conflict, and it placed a portion of its artillery in position near Gunstett. It was between 8 and 9 o'clock. About that time there was a lull in the fight of the Vth Corps in the centre; but to the right and to the left of it the battle was continued on the part of the IInd Bavarian Corps and of the XIth Corps. To support the forces near him General von Kirchbach again entered into the battle, placed all his artillery, 84 pieces, in position and prepared his corps at Dieffenbach for attack. At 9.30 the German batteries began to play and soon gained a decided superiority.

Opposite Spachbach a projecting corner of the Niederwald almost reaches the Sauerbach. A part of the advanced guard of the XIth Corps had fearlessly crossed this swollen brook (most of the bridges having been removed) and had occupied this bit of woodland. General von Kirchbach ordered the 20th Brigade (the 37th and 50th Regiments) to support them. They started from Wörth for an energetic attack, but encountered such superior hostile forces that the 19th Brigade (6th and 46th Regiments) had to follow in support of them. They were barely able to maintain their position round Wörth and along the road to Hagenau, so great was the effect of the incessantly repeated attacks of the French in close columns. The nature of the ground was altogether favourable to the defenders; in covered corners and behind undulations of the ground they could always reassemble and again advance in great force, whilst the Germans had to wade through the Sauer, to hurry through 800 paces of exposed meadow land, and then to climb up the slopes, all under the eyes of a foe in a more elevated position and possessed of long-ranging rifles.

It was 11 o'clock in the morning. Twice already General von Kirchbach had received orders from the Crown Prince to avoid bringing on a battle and everything that might lead to a continuance of it. But now, in the midst of the hottest fight, a cessation was not to be thought of. To the messenger who brought the second order, Major von Hahnke of the General Staff, he answered: "Tell H.R.H. that I have already dismissed General MacMahon with a hearty Good-bye."

The same order of the Crown Prince reached the XIth Corps at the moment when the onset of the French had pressed back the foremost sections as far as Gunstett. A little earlier the order had been delivered to the IIInd Bavarian Corps, for whom it was not intended, and as General von Hartmann was in a position to withdraw from the fight, firing on the right wing gradually ceased.

General von Kirchbach was, however, determined not to let the enemy score any success, and begged his neighbours right and left to support him. General von Hartmann at once declared himself ready to return to the field he had quitted; General von Bose at first quoted his orders not to cross the river Sauer.

Things could not remain as they were; falling back further meant a repulse; what was to be done then? About noon General von Kirchbach decided to accept the grave responsibility of advancing with all the forces that were at hand. One half of his infantry were, despite their utmost efforts, engaged in a fluctuating contest, swaying to and fro on the slopes of Wörth. He caused the 17th and 18th Brigades (58th and 59th Regiments, and 7th and 47th Regiments) hitherto kept back, to advance in support, partly through Wörth and partly below the town. At the same time he once more appealed to General von Bose, who for years had been his best friend, and the latter sent word that he would never leave him in the lurch. In the meantime the XIth Corps had been concentrated and had received its instructions. Despite the orders from Headquarters, General von Bose directed his attack on the enemy's right flank, and only a small reserve remained at Gunstett. At noon the whole XIth Corps crossed the valley of the Sauer at Spachbach, Gunstett and Dürrenbach and advanced to the attack on the Niederwald, on the Albrechtshäuser farm and Morsbronn. It was successful, and the French began to give way. It seemed as if the XIth Corps was to bring relief to the Vth Corps which was struggling with unbroken courage, but under unfavourable conditions. This actually took place. The corps of

the two friends (Kirchbach and Bose), each pressing on along its blood-stained path, contributed the largest share to the victory won in the first decisive battle.

At Sulz, the Headquarters of the Crown Prince, all listened with close attention to the sound of the heavy artillery fire. At 11 o'clock it had become so loud that the Crown Prince took to horse and galloped with all speed to the battle-field. Between 12 and 1 o'clock he arrived on the heights east of Wörth, and at once saw that a discontinuance of the fight was not to be thought of. On his way to the field he had already approved the action of the Vth and XIth Corps, and now, taking in a view of the whole field, he issued the following orders.

"The IIInd Bavarian Corps is to press upon the left flank of the enemy, so as to get to the rear of it in the direction of Reichshofen. The Ist Bavarian Corps, leaving a division as a reserve, will place itself between the IIInd Bavarian Corps and the Vth Corps; the XIth Corps will advance vigorously through Elsasshausen upon Fröschweiler; the Württembergers will follow the XIth Corps, and the Badeners will remain at Surburg. The Vth Corps will delay its frontal attack till the operations on the left and right become effective."

Thus the Commander-in-Chief brought together the hitherto disconnected attacks into a common plan, cleared up all doubts, allotted to the different parts of the force their several tasks, and formed reserves to resist a repulse or to secure advantages when gained. About that time, towards one o'clock, the 2nd Brigade of the Ist Bavarian Corps, advancing via Lobsann and Lampertsloch, had reached the village of Görsdorf and were ready to cross the valley of the Sauerbach and to attack the slopes of the little wood at Fröschweiler; to the right of the Ist Bavarian Corps, parts of the IIInd Bavarians kept up a delaying musketry-fire from the wood of Langensulzbach. To the left of the Vth Corps the XIth was advancing towards the Niederwald; the 2nd Württemberg Brigade was approaching.

The numerical superiority of the Germans now began to make itself felt. In the hours of the morning the most advanced divisions of the Bavarians and Prussians had been only, here and there, led piecemeal against the foe, and always encountered superior hostile forces; now, in the afternoon, by degrees 87,300 Germans faced 54,300 Frenchmen. Only this superiority of numbers, combined with the determination and enthusiasm of all engaged, made it possible to achieve success in the teeth of the immense advantages possessed by the enemy in the strength of his position.

MacMahon's army consisted of the Ist Corps with 4 divisions, and to these was added Conseil-Dumesnil's Division, which, as we have seen, came by train from Mühlhausen via Hagenau to Reichshofen; accordingly the army consisted of 5 divisions; to these were added two brigades of cavalry, one division of cuirassiers and a reserve artillery of 8 batteries; and there were, besides, three batteries with each division. A considerable proportion of MacMahon's force consisted of African troops. These were eighteen battalions of Turcos and Zouaves.

A place more suitable for manœuvring troops than the elevated plain of Nehweiler, Fröschweiler and Elsasshausen can hardly be imagined; it was easy to send reinforcements to any threatened point, and as the heights that were occupied commanded the whole field, every movement of the enemy could be watched, and met by concentrating superior numbers by a short march on every threatened point, while the reserves were kept hidden by natural features of the ground. Only the right wing of the French

shewed some weakness; it was, in fact *en l'air*. The whole front from north of Fröschweiler as far as the neighbourhood of Morsbronn was skilfully occupied. At Eberbach, behind Elsasshausen and Fröschweiler, the cavalry and reserve artillery were held in readiness.

The successive stages of the combat, which from this period of the action was systematically directed, were, for the XIth Corps, as follows: Capture of the Abrechtshäuser farm and of the Niederwald; reformation of the corps so as to front Elsasshausen, capture of this hamlet, and the decisive struggle against Fröschweiler, the last bulwark of the enemy.—All this was accomplished between 1 and 5 o'clock. In the centre the lines of attack fronted the strongest part of the position of the enemy; and the heights could only be captured little by little. Further to the right, the 1st and IIInd Bavarian Corps advanced against the steep ascents north of Fröschweiler. On the French side:

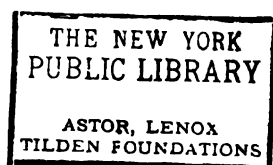


TURCO WITH THE FLAG.

tenacious and resolute defence, accompanied, at times, by attacks which were well-nigh desperate. On the German side: courage in attack, overcoming all obstacles. On both sides the consciousness that the future life of both nations was now at stake. Acting on a wider circle and yet in ever closer ranks the German force was pushing forward; advancing hour by hour as the evening drew on. The defenders found themselves more and more closely hemmed in within a space that was getting smaller and smaller. Towards the last hours of the evening the circle round Fröschweiler was almost closed up, so that there was hardly any gap left for the hurried flight of the last defenders. But the bodily and mental tension of the attacking forces had also reached its uttermost limits. An immediate hot pursuit of the enemy by these breathless, panting storming-columns could not be thought of.

It is true that every corps had to a certain extent had its fighting area allotted to it, but in their endeavour to support each other the several corps had got intermingled at the flanks. The 5th Prussian Jäger Battalion had reached the extreme right wing of the Bavarians, and similarly the Württemberg 2nd Jäger Battalion formed the left wing of the XIth Corps. Regiments, battalions and companies were mixed up, and the officers had to get their troops together as best they could. Only the rare aptitude of the soldiers, their intelligent appreciation of the vicissitudes of the contest, and their unbounded confidence in their leaders made this possible.

Let us follow the XIth Corps on its march from Gunstett through the Niederwald to Elsasshausen. General von Bose, with three columns, crossed the valley under cover of the fire of his artillery, which was shelling the enemy from the Gunstett heights. The column to the right at Spachbach, the 88th and parts of the 80th and 87th Regiments, took possession of the nearest corner of the Niederwald and established itself on its northern edge; the centre column, the 95th Regiment, the 11th Battalion of Jägers and parts of the 80th and 87th Regiments descended near Gunstett into the valley, crossed it and took the Albrechtshäuser farm by storm; the left column, the 32nd and 94th Regiments, advancing via Dürrenbach, obtained a firm footing in





LAST CHARGE OF FRENCH CUIRASSIERS, DIVISION BONNEMAINS, UPON ELSASSHAUSEN.

[face p. 91.

Morsbronn and was on the point of deploying to the west of it. That was the state of things at 11 o'clock. General von Bose, although wounded in the hip, remained with his troops.

The commander of the right wing of the French recognised the gravity of the danger. His infantry were retreating in confusion to the Niederwald; he therefore ordered the cavalry brigade (Michel) drawn up at Eberbach, two regiments of cuirassiers and one regiment of lancers to drive back the enemy. The Prussians were emerging out of Morsbronn when the attacking cuirassiers dashed at them. The infantry opened fire against them just as they happened to be, in line or as skirmishers. A short distance in front of their scattered line the attack was shattered. Riders and riderless horses fled far away to Dürrenbach and Walburg; others fell under the fire of the



ZOUAVES AT WÖRTH.

infantry at the rear, and others again succumbed to the swords of the 13th Hussars, who formed the extreme left wing of the XIth Corps. But time had been gained for the French infantry. It deployed for an attack on the Albrechtshäuser farm, and this at first succeeded till the 83rd Regiment came up in support and drove out the French.

It was 2 o'clock when the columns from Morsbronn and the Albrechtshäuser farm changed front to the right and penetrated into the Niederwald. They were met by a tenacious resistance, chiefly due to the 3rd Regiment of Zouaves, which lost 3 men out of 4 in this battle. Only after an hour's struggle was the northern edge of the Niederwald reached. Before that time General von Bose had issued the following order: "The entire artillery and the whole of the rest of the corps will follow the movements of the infantry." Thus at 3 o'clock the first large section of the army was in good fighting trim west of the Sauerbach, on the right flank of the enemy.

As soon as the northern edge of the Niederwald had been taken it became clear that the struggle had now reached the heart of the hostile position; masses of French infantry and artillery were crowded up in Elsasshausen, and in the small wood that lies only 200 paces from the real Niederwald. It was a critical moment; General von Bose placed 8 batteries in position against Elsasshausen. The houses were soon ablaze, but the enemy did not fall back till German infantry advanced to the assault. The foremost skirmishers rushed upon the village, and all of the second line who were able to do so, pressed after them. At half-past three Elsasshausen and the small wood were taken. Along the road leading from Wörth to Elsasshausen and on to Gundershofen, the troops endeavoured to deploy, and all officers of every rank were busy in the foremost lines. They were now within 2000 paces of Fröschweiler, the enemy's last stronghold. The ranks were seriously thinned, and the difficulties of command were much increased; in fact nothing could be done but to indicate the object aimed at and to trust that every subaltern and every private soldier would understand and perform his share of the work.

But the French Commander-in-Chief had no intention of giving up Elsasshausen on such easy terms. His 1st Regiment of Turcos was the kernel of the reserves he held in hand; with this at its head the French infantry advanced to attack the Niederwald. At first the thin line of Prussians gave way; but immediately afterwards the infantry and artillery on the right wheeled round, attacked the enemy's flank and drove him back. Suddenly the four regiments of cuirassiers of Bonnemain's Cavalry Division thundered out, regiment after regiment; charge followed charge. The infantry received them, as and where they happened to stand, the batteries fired case at them. In a moment hundreds strewed the field and the rest were scattered in every direction. As in the first charge near Morsbronn, the nature of the ground and of the vegetation had been unfavourable to cavalry.

The end had come: the enemy was driven back upon Fröschweiler, his last stronghold. Against this the death blow had now to be aimed, from south, east and north. Already fugitive troops had sought shelter in the Great Wood towards Hagenau and Reichshofen. It was a quarter to four.

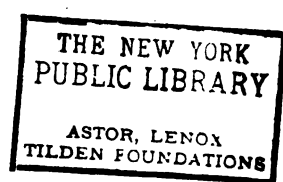
One would have supposed that the advance of the XIth Corps would have immediately relieved the Vth, but this did not appear to be the case. Raoult's Division, drawn up at Fröschweiler, being favoured by the nature of the ground, had succeeded in advancing by rushes from point to point of the more elevated ground, and had been reinforced by Ducrot's Division, which, being to the north of Fröschweiler, had been less severely pressed.

With the exception of a few battalions General von Kirchbach had gradually drawn upon all his troops. Round Wörth the battle was still raging, north and south of the highway leading to Fröschweiler. The primary object was to repel the attacks made by the enemy with reckless energy, and then, step by step, to make headway up the slopes. By heroic persistence, but with ever increasing losses, the Prussians obtained this result. The French yielded but slowly, hurling themselves with defiant courage upon the enemy as he struggled uphill. "Before our regiment stormed," relates an eye-witness, "our comrades of the 6th and 7th Regiments had been repeatedly repulsed. All our officers having fallen, we stormed four times without them, and the drummers beat the assault without orders; but for all that we could not have taken



ASSAULT UPON FRÖSCHWEILER.
(By permission of the Photographic Society of Berlin.)

[face p. 92.]



the position, if a company of the 5th Battalion of Jägers had not come to our aid, and if the Bavarians had not appeared on the left flank of the French."

The fight in the centre had reached its climax at two o'clock. The French Brigade commanded by Maire dashed out from Elsasshausen towards Wörth once more, and hurled back the Prussians towards its outskirts. But from right and left the skirmishers fell upon the advancing French, and at the western extremity of Wörth four battalions of the 46th and 58th Regiments appeared as reinforcements. Attacked thus from two sides, Maire's Brigade suffered terribly, and fled back, shattered, to Elsasshausen. Now at last the pursuing Prussians gained the much contested heights on both sides of the road to Fröschweiler. Here they found more open country, positions and a field of fire; a large part of the artillery of the Vth Corps could be brought over and placed in position on the left wing in conjunction with the batteries of the XIth Corps. This was about 3 o'clock.

The situation of the Bavarians, on the right of the Vth Corps, began also to improve. It is true that only some portions of the Bavarian Division which had been engaged in the morning could be led against the enemy, but the 1st Bavarian Division had taken their station beside the Vth Corps and, attacking fiercely, it struggled up the heights to the north-west of Fröschweiler. At this point the French had occupied a very advantageous position in two patches of woodland. Here, as in every other part of the battlefield the contest swayed to and fro, as was to be expected in dealing with a defensive force of such rare energy. The Bavarians were joined by some Prussians: 2 battalions of the 59th; part of the 37th Regiment and the 5th Battalion of Jägers. The resolute advance of the 1st Bavarian Regiment, which was hurrying up in close formation, carried the whole line of attack on with it; every step had, of course, to be purchased with blood, but at about 4 o'clock the Bavarians crowned the heights close to Fröschweiler and to the north of it. On the extreme right wing the effect of the turning column of the corps of General von Orff (2nd, 4th, 9th Bavarian Battalions of Jägers and parts of the 2nd Regiment) was felt.

Meanwhile reinforcements had reached the XIth Corps, south of Fröschweiler; the 2nd Württemberg Brigade, with the 3rd Battalion of Jägers at its head, was led by the staff-officer of the commander of the Württemberg Division, from Spachbach to Elsasshausen. Received on all sides with cheers, hurrahs and fraternal greetings, these fresh battalions arrived just in time to serve as a solid nucleus for the panting and confused swarms of skirmishers, in the last attack, that for the capture of Fröschweiler.

An overwhelming concentration of artillery, consisting of ten batteries of the XIth and five of the Vth Corps, opened fire so as to crush the place with shells and prepare the attack. Against these the 48 pieces of the reserve artillery of the French could not of course do anything. Two Prussian batteries advanced upon the village to within case-range, drove back the defenders, who were once more advancing to the attack, and opened the road for the infantry. The 3rd Battalion of the Württemberg Jägers had meanwhile worked forward by rushes across the undulating ground near Elsasshausen, towards the western extremity of Fröschweiler. The commander of the battalion, Lieutenant-Colonel von Linck, was able from the extreme left wing, to gain a general view of the whole position. The moment for the last general assault had arrived; he ordered the bugle to sound: "Advance along the whole line". The groups of

combatants rushed from all sides upon the village; from south and east, parts of the XIth and Vth Corps, together with the battalions of the 2nd and 5th Württemberg Regiments in close order; from the north the Bavarians. At the beginning of this last assault General von Bose was wounded a second time.

A hand-to-hand fight now followed from house to house in the village. But already parts of the 94th Regiment began to appear at the western extremity of the place and threatened to cut off such of the enemy as were still offering resistance. All who were not cut down or made prisoners fled in confusion towards Reichshofen and Niederbronn; many fell into the hands of the 32nd Regiment; which had preceded them into the Great Wood in the direction of the highway to Reichshofen. Five battalions of Ducrot's Division and three batteries had held out to the last. Now followed a general *débâcle* along the line of retreat, and at 5 o'clock the battle was over.

The streets of Fröschweiler resounded with the battle-cries of the Germans. They knocked at the closed doors and windows: "The Germans have come! Hurrah!" From cellars and other hiding-places the inhabitants came forth, and accounts had to be settled with some of them; some misguided men here, as in other places, had been guilty of violations of the rights of war. Happily for themselves these people had for a thousand years spoken an excellent German patois, and merely mutilated their scrappy French.

The commanders of both the Prussian corps had been wounded; General von Kirchbach previously in the battle of Weissenburg. Nevertheless he assumed with unbroken force of will responsibility for the battle, and carried it through manfully. His wound prevented him from riding. In the evening, whilst he was among the King's Grenadiers, the Crown Prince happened to come by, and on catching sight of him, hastened up to him with outstretched arms, embraced and kissed him with warm words of gratitude. An example of genuine German affection on the blood-stained field of battle—the Royal son of Hohenzollern, and his General!

Gneisenau¹ had in former days no small difficulty in establishing the principle of very effective *pursuit* of the enemy after victory had been gained. There the troops stand, panting on the battle-field, having fought all day; the cruel tension of mind and body relaxes at sight of the flying foe. The commander looks out for fresh troops, for reserves, and finds only here and there a section still intact; why! have not nearly all been fighting in the front ranks?—What he had in vain ordered others to do after the battles of the Katzbach² and of Leipzig,³ what Napoleon the 1st never accomplished, and what he admitted to be the perfection of command, that Gneisenau personally carried out after Waterloo.

Gneisenau's idea of keeping the overthrown enemy on the run, of not giving him time to breathe and of anticipating the result of a possible future contest by taking

¹ August Graf Neithardt von Gneisenau, born 1760, was at first in Austrian, and then in Prussian service. He distinguished himself greatly in many wars, and in the War of Liberation held, after Blücher, the most important position in the Prussian army and was Blücher's intimate friend. He died in 1831. His statue, erected in 1855, stands on the Opernplatz in Berlin. [*Trs.*]

² The battle of the Katzbach was fought of Aug. 26th, 1813, between Macdonald and Blücher. The Prussians took 103 guns, 250 carriages, 2 eagles, all the baggage and 18,000 prisoners. It was the first victory of importance in the War of Liberation.

³ The battle of Leipzig was mentioned above, p. 29 (note).

full advantage of pursuit at the moment, is tempting enough to induce a Commander-in-Chief to give such orders to special portions of his army when the catastrophe is at hand, as will enable them to cut off the retreat of the enemy. If such bodies of troops avoid the battle-field by making a *détour*, then the infantry at all events will arrive too late; if they cross the field of battle before the final decision, then they get mixed up in the fight, and are drawn into the turmoil at the close of the day, in order to afford new support to the thinned ranks of the combatants spent with the day's toil. This was in fact the fate of the 2nd Württemberg Brigade. At Spachbach the commander of the Württemberg Division had already received orders to march upon Reichshofen. He directed, as we have seen, his leading columns upon Elsasshausen. Here the 2nd Württemberg Brigade gave encouragement to the thinned and disordered ranks of the XIth Corps. The last stroke of the day's work had yet to be done. Whether the task would be easy or difficult, who could foretell? This much was clear to all: there was work more urgent than pursuit and the continuance of the march to be done.

The 2nd Württemberg Brigade moved along the road to Gundershofen, following the men that were streaming to the rear. The Brigade of Württemberg Cavalry had also been ordered to Reichshofen; it took the road via the Albrechtshäuser farm and Eberbach. Somewhat later the 3rd Württemberg Brigade, the reserve artillery, two squadrons of the 1st Regiment of Württemberg Cavalry and the 14th Regiment of Prussian Hussars marched on Reichshofen. . Soon after one o'clock the Crown Prince had ordered the IIInd Bavarian Corps to press on in the direction of Reichshofen upon the enemy's line of retreat; for that service the 5th Brigade of the Bavarians and their Brigade of Uhlans with some artillery were detailed. The 2nd Bavarian Division and Prince Albrecht's Division of Cavalry were available for pursuit on a large scale. But it seems that the responsible commanders were not willing to part with their last reserves. The cavalry division was not ordered forward till the evening, and part of it reached Eberbach and Griesbach at night; the 2nd Bavarian Division remained on the heights of Fröschweiler. The pursuit was therefore left to the smaller bodies of troops already mentioned, and these were scattered far over the field.

The disorganisation of the French army was so complete that, not only single men, but whole masses became unmanageable, and would not stay their flight till they had placed the obstacle formed by the valley of the Falkenstein brook between themselves and their foe. Many a time the eyes of the French commanders must on that decisive day have wistfully turned from the Fröschweiler heights in the direction of Bitsch. The Vth Corps was then at the distance of one day's march. By forced marches or by train, reinforcements might have been sent, but nothing of the kind was done. Slowly and very cautiously Lespart's Division moved forward through the mountain-valley in the direction of the battle-field. At 6 o'clock in the evening it had reached Oberbronn, and was now in a position to afford protection to the fugitives.

In the Great Wood, in the field adjoining and at Gundershofen and Reichshofen Prussian and Württemberg cavalry captured many more prisoners, artillery and material. Reichshofen was occupied and partly barricaded. The Württemberg cavalry dashed into and through the village, and jointly with the Bavarians they advanced in the direction of Niederbronn, but here the pursuers encountered the fresh forces of

Lespart's Division and therefore fell back upon Reichshofen, where they bivouacked for the night. A detachment of Bavarians during the pursuit succeeded in driving the French out of Niederbronn before it was dark, and pushing them on to Oberbronn; the Bavarians remained at Niederbronn. Other Prussian, Württemberg and Bavarian detachments took up positions at Gundershofen, Griesbach, Eberbach and Reichshofen; behind them the Vth Corps assembled at Fröschweiler, the XIth at Elsasshausen and Wörth, the 1st Bavarian at Fröschweiler, the IInd Bavarian at Lembach, Reichshofen and Niederbronn; the Württembergers at Engelshof and the Badeners at Gunstett.

The pastor of Fröschweiler describes all this push and flow of troops in hot pursuit,

thus: "Again new troops arrive, as if hundreds of thousands of vindictive spirits were moving on to follow up the foe with the sword of vengeance. But hark! through all the hurly-burly of war there sound across the field music and hymns of praise." The evening drew in, and the troops took up their quarters at the bivouac fires. There rang, across the battle-field, in loud accord, the hymn: "Now thank we all our God," and soon afterwards when night had fairly set in the weary men were buried in deep sleep.

When Napoleon the 1st after the battle of Ligny saw the columns of his enemy give way, he concluded that the Prussians were retreating towards the Rhine where they had their nearest reinforcements and other resources. Accordingly on the following morning he sent off, in the direction of the Rhine, a force which he very much needed at the critical moment. On far better grounds it was assumed at the



BAVARIAN MEMORIAL.

Headquarters of the Crown Prince on the evening of the 6th of August, that the French, beaten at Fröschweiler, had fallen back via Bitsch and Saargemünd in order to join as quickly as possible the forces of the Emperor. The first orders of August the 7th were based on this assumption; but on the evening of August 7th it was known, thanks to the activity of the pursuing German horsemen, especially that of the cavalry division, that the whole of MacMahon's army, together with the Vth Corps of General de Failly, which had been stationed at Bitsch, was after an uninterrupted flight in a south-west direction from Oberbronn and Zinsweiler, assembling in Zabern. Towards the west and north-west there were no longer any hostile forces of importance to be

met with, and only one battalion with some artillery had been left at Bitsch. Advancing to the very gateways of the mountain-range, up to Steinburg, the Germans had again and again scared away the enemy, who here and there rested and took breath. We now know that the remains of MacMahon's army, in order to escape their pursuers, had left Zabern that very night, and had on the 8th of August, by forced marches, reached Saarburg and even Luneville beyond. Scarcely had the Germans regained touch with their enemy on the 7th of August, when it was lost again; the passes of the Vosges were between the two armies.

* * *

Sunday August 7th! A day of thanksgiving and rejoicing all over Germany and in the camp at Wörth and Fröschweiler. No longer a mere happy foreboding, but full confidence took possession of the hearts of our people; they knew how the war would end, what they might expect from the heroic sons so full of devotion, so well prepared, whom the country had sent out on this occasion. On the evening of August 6th King William telegraphed to the Queen: "What happiness! this new victory gained by Fritz! Let us praise God for his mercy!—We shall fire a *feu de joie*." Every hour brought further reports, shewing that the results were even greater than had been thought; especially when the news of the victory at Spicheren was added to that of Wörth.

It is a magnificent and impressive scene to see a victorious army reposing on the field, which it has won in a contest of ten hours' duration. After a series of fatiguing days of march and two battles of attack, a day of rest on August 7th appeared indispensable. So many things had to be arranged both with respect to the whole army and among individual men. Add to this the number of dead and wounded! The German army alone lost 489 officers and 10,153 rank and file; these losses were distributed as follows: the Vth Corps: 220 officers and 5436 rank and file; the XIth Corps: 179 officers and 2965 rank and file; the Ist Bavarian Corps: 37 officers and 746 rank and file; the IIInd Bavarian Corps: 36 officers and 667 rank and file; the Württembergers: 17 officers and 339 rank and file. The severest losses of 17 to 37 per cent were suffered by the 46th, 6th, 50th, 37th Regiments; the



GERMAN MEMORIAL.

2nd, 7th, 47th, 9th Bavarian, the 3rd Battalion of Württemberg Jägers. The trophies captured were: 28 pieces of artillery, 5 mitrailleuses, some eagles and flags.

The French lost 10,000 men dead and wounded, 6000 unwounded prisoners taken on the field and at least 5000 dispersed. Some regiments, like the 2nd Turcos, the 13th Light Infantry Regiment and others were simply annihilated; they had fought with French ardour and lost 64 to 93 per cent of their men.

What an amount of work now for German charity, for physicians, nurses and field clergy! Thousands of soldiers wandered over the field and sought for friends and relatives amidst heaps of corpses. But at home, from the German towns, columns of volunteer nurses had set out. Servants of the Red Cross arrived in shoals on the battle-field; young men from Karlsruhe, Speyer, Mannheim, Stuttgart, even from distant Berlin and other towns; sisters of mercy and deaconesses. German sympathy and pity with sorrow and suffering, rose high, helping and assuaging! And withal there were also scenes of merriment, as for example, when soldiers examined the knapsacks of French officers, with their toilette appurtenances, and made all sorts of fun of them.



FRENCH EAGLE,
CAPTURED AT
WÖRTH.

No letters were ever looked forward to with more longing than those that were then awaited in Silesia and Posen, in Thuringia, Hessen and Westphalia; in Bavaria and in Suabia. In every part of the field thousands were seen sending greetings to their loved ones at home. Already the field-post had set up its office in the open air. A French witness narrates how the German soldiers, sitting down under a tree or elsewhere, were sending home post-cards as often as opportunity offered. "I knew before the campaign," he adds in astonishment, "how high was the average of culture in Germany, but how fully universal culture had developed the spirit of this people, of that I had no notion. Almost every one carried a notebook, in which he entered what he saw, and every one could write."

THE MARCH FORWARD OF THE THIRD ARMY.

On the 7th of August they were busy at Headquarters in arranging the marching routes, to guide the Third Army, between the 8th and 12th of August, from the heights at Fröschweiler, through the passes of the Vosges mountains, to the River Saar, the right wing to Saarunion, the left to Saarburg. No impetuous onrush on the way, but a well-considered systematic advance towards the object in view, viz., to encounter the enemy once more in the best trim and with combined forces.

On the 8th of August the Third Army entered on its march through the Vosges, on a pretty broad front; each corps by a route of its own. The effect of the arrival at this time of the VIth Corps on the extreme right wing was distinctly felt; the 12th Division advanced from Landau; to the left of them the Bavarians, then the Vth Corps with the Württembergers, and on the extreme left wing the XIth Corps. A series of small fortresses commanded some of the roads across the Vosges: in the north, Bitsch; on the line of march of the Württembergers, Lichtenberg; on that of the Vth Corps, Lützelstein, and Pfalzburg on that of the XIth Corps. The Baden

Division reached Brumath on the 8th of August, and took up a position of observation towards Strassburg. The IInd Bavarian Corps left a battalion and a squadron before Bitsch, which completely blocked the main road, so that the route had to be changed to follow by-ways.

On the 9th of August the Württemberg Division was ordered to take possession of the fortress of Lichtenberg. This task was intrusted to the 1st and 3rd Battalions of Jägers, two batteries and some cavalry; during the assault on this fortified place two companies of the 2nd Regiment arrived and took part in the fight. But the walls



GERMAN SOLDIERS EXAMINING THE TRUNKS OF FRENCH OFFICERS.

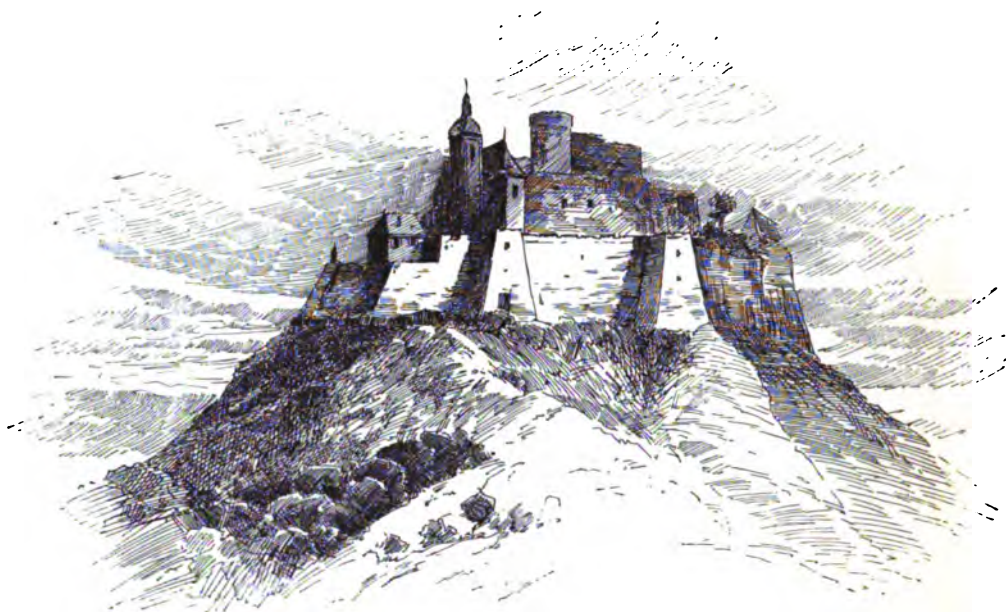
being assault-proof, were more than sufficiently strong to resist mere field-artillery. The 1st Battalion of Jägers therefore received orders to invest the place. A fire, which broke out in the main building compelled the garrison to surrender at 8 o'clock in the evening, and thus 3 officers and 213 men were made prisoners of war. The Württembergers lost in dead and wounded 2 officers and 36 men.

The fortress of Lützelstein, where the Vth Corps arrived on the 9th of August, was found to have been abandoned. The XIth Corps, commanded by General von Gersdorff, because its commander, General von Bose, was laid up by his two severe wounds, arrived on the 10th of August at the fortress of Pfalzburg, which blocked

its line of march. The place withstood a bombardment from 60 pieces of field artillery. Portions of the VIth Corps, which were now arriving, were charged with its investment, which became necessary. This duty was afterwards handed over to the troops of the Landwehr. On the 12th of August the XIth Corps had reached Saarburg, and the other corps to their right the line of the Saar, downwards as far as Saarunion. Acting as scouts on an extensive scale, portions of the 4th Division of Cavalry had advanced as far as Luneville and Nancy. A good stroke of work had been done by the Third Army. Its Commander-in-Chief, the Crown Prince, addressed it as follows:

“Soldiers of the Third Army!

“Having crossed the French borders and fought victoriously at Weissenburg, and



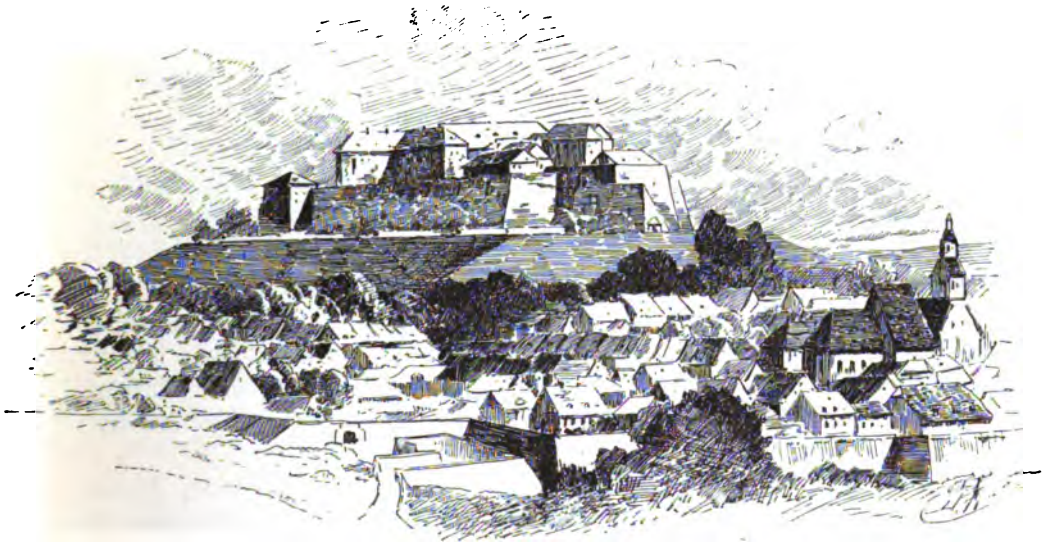
LICHTENBERG.

having immediately afterwards, by the glorious victory at Wörth, compelled the enemy to evacuate Elsass, we have to-day already crossed the Vosges mountains, have advanced far into France, and have effected a junction with our First and Second Armies, which have also by their victories driven back the enemy. These successes, full of happy omen, are due to your admirable devotion and valour, to your perseverance, to your endurance under all hardships and to your strenuous exertions. I thank you in the name of our Commander-in-Chief, the King of Prussia, as well as in that of the allied German Princes. I am proud to be at the head of an army which the enemy has hitherto been unable to withstand, whose deeds our German Fatherland regards with admiration.

“Given at our Headquarters at Petersbach, at the foot of the Vosges mountains, on August 11th, 1870.

“FREDERICK WILLIAM, CROWN PRINCE OF PRUSSIA.”

Nowhere was the line of march disturbed by the enemy, neither was there any arming of the people amongst the mountaineers as had been anticipated; but on the most southern line of march the XIth Corps found numerous traces of MacMahon's retreating troops. From letters that were captured we learnt that, after the 6th of August, MacMahon's army was wholly disorganized and suffered from want of everything. Discipline had given way, and looting was the order of the day. "It is desirable to forward the troops by train to Châlons, to spare the population so sad and pitiful a sight." A number of soldiers were without arms, without knapsacks or any outfit whatever. All were furious and believed themselves to have been betrayed. Making many a détour MacMahon had at last assembled at Châlons the wrecks of his own



BITSCH.

Ist Army Corps, also the Vth and VIIth Corps, and with these and the newly formed XIIth Corps he formed an Army of Reserve, which on the 22nd of August was ready to march. A French General wrote about this army in the camp at Châlons: "I must tell the truth about the condition of this force. I know war, but never have I seen troops in such a wretched plight." Commanders of every degree, high and low, had to struggle against endless difficulties; Napoleon had already practically abdicated, both as Commander-in-Chief and as Emperor. The cry of treason was repeated throughout France; the idea that they had been defeated in due form by a sturdy enemy seemed too revolting; it appeared to their self-esteem impossible. "A part of the overwrought press even ventured to couple the word 'traitor', which our troops had first heard the French use at Wörth, with the name of the Emperor." The other commanders fared no better, especially MacMahon. Tacitus, the shrewd student of human nature, says: "There is a fatality which attends the command of armies: in success every one claims his share, but failure is ascribed to one alone." In Paris an energetic

republicanism began to raise its head, and to attack as a set of gold-laced buffoons the courtiers of Napoleon III. The people were promised that parliament would be summoned and Paris be put in a better state of defence.

The Third German Army had gained touch with the Second Army, directly with the IVth Corps. The Baden Division had advanced as far as Wendenheim, and since Strassburg could not be taken by a coup-de-main, this division was on the 10th of August intrusted by the Great Headquarters with the special task of investing it. The connection of this division with the Third Army was therefore severed, but it was replaced by the VIth Corps and the 2nd Division of Cavalry. The following orders were issued by the Great Headquarters: "The Third Army will continue its march on a broad front towards the line Nancy-Luneville, and the First and Second Armies will move towards Metz." On the 15th of August therefore, the onward march was resumed; the 4th Division of Cavalry led the van; nowhere was there any resistance offered. At Luneville the golden keys of the town were surrendered to German cavalry; Nancy was found unoccupied; the small fortress of Marsal surrendered to the Bavarians. News arrived that strong hostile forces were assembling at Metz and at Châlons.

On the 15th of August—the "Jour Napoléon"!—the Crown Prince made his entry into Luneville; the army occupied the line Nancy—Luneville, but a large part of it had already reached the Moselle. A month previously the people of Berlin had gone out to meet their King, and in his palace the order of mobilisation had been given. This is the "Jour Napoléon"!—but Napoleon III's empire, far from glittering with a halo of victory, steals from court to court, begging for alliance; Paris, instead of her festive garment, mourns in sackcloth and ashes; full of care and anxiety, France listens to the thunder of the German army, and not a voice raises the cry: "Vive l'Empereur!"

On the 18th of August there were intercepted, for the first time, decrees of the French military authorities, which ordered the arming of the *garde nationale sédentaire*. This measure laid the foundation for all the evil practices of the Francs-tireurs. The Third Army was, however, directed to continue steadily its march upon Châlons and Paris, and to aim at the capture of the fortress of Toul, which, together with Bitsch and Pfalzburg, made itself disagreeable by blocking the roads. Pfalzburg was only taken on the 12th of December after a four-months' investment. The rocky fort of Bitsch even held out till the conclusion of peace, when it surrendered to the Bavarians.

On the 20th of August the River Meuse was crossed at different points, and Headquarters were transferred from Nancy to Vaucouleurs. On that day the Crown Prince visited King William at Pont-à-Mousson, to report on the past operations and to discuss further measures.

The news of the victory at Gravelotte caused great joy in the Third Army; they had now a clear course for their march upon Paris. On the 23rd of August the Head Quarters of the Third Army was at Ligny, on the road to Vitry-le-Français, between the Meuse and the Marne. On the 24th news was received from the leading squadrons, who had advanced as far as Châlons, that the camp was deserted and that the Reserve Army had marched away. Not till the 25th of August was it clearly known that MacMahon intended to relieve Metz, and on the next day the Third

Army was ordered to wheel to the right, so that the westward advance pursued hitherto was changed to a movement northward, towards St. Menehould, Grandpré and through the Argonnes.¹ Very considerable forced marches were now demanded of the Third Army.

THE FRUITS OF VICTORY.

Like a gruesome spectre, haunting the peasants and townsfolk, the stream of German troops rolled on through the towns and villages of France, systematically reinforced, moving with the regularity of clock-work, inexorably advancing into Old France; all these hosts of men with cold resolute faces being borne along by a burning and yet repressed enthusiasm, avengers both of former miseries inflicted and endured, and of the still recent schemes for fresh humiliations. An English reporter writes on the 12th of August: "The movement of troops does not cease for one moment, although nobody knows whither they are going. With them arrive the field-post and the field-telegraph. A more complete organisation cannot be imagined. Like huge snakes the columns wind through the country." The regular army is followed at a short distance by men to replace losses, by Landwehr men and by troops for the line of communications.

"Will they soon have all passed by? Why, it is as though the earth had opened and were sending army after army forward and ever forward into the interior of the country. I believe the country people are simply petrified by what they see, and fancy that all Germany is being poured out over them. The peasants keep quiet, but stare bareheaded, with open mouths, when the glittering train of the Crown Prince's Headquarters rides by."

Lies having been spread abroad that the Prussians, and indeed all the Germans, would behave as barbarians, carrying off everything and so on, the terrified people, even the German-speaking Alsations had been scared from their homes and driven into the woods. Gradually they found out that they might return without danger, and in many places they made their appearance. But soon new difficulties arose; after the River Saar had been crossed the use of the German language gradually ceased. To this had yet to be added the peculiarity that the French were accustomed to regard their own soldiers as rough men belonging to the lowest strata of society, who shouldered the musket for pay, like day-labourers, or mercenaries. The people had never yet seen a well-bred army raised by universal military service, and consequently they looked upon and treated the Germans with equal scorn and haughty contempt. In the towns there was less difficulty than in the country, where the people were more scared. People were amazed to see the Germans making daily use of prayer-book and hymn-book, to observe the geographical and philological knowledge, not only of the officers, but also of the privates; to see the self-restraint of the Germans towards women, a thing wholly incomprehensible to Frenchmen.

A noteworthy effect was produced in foreign countries by the news of the German victories. "We all were convinced," writes an Englishman, who was favourably

¹ The forest of the Argonnes lies on a rocky tableland in north-eastern France, on the frontiers of Lorraine and Champagne, between the mountains of the Meuse to the south and those of the Ardennes to the north. [*Trs.*]

inclined to Germany, "that the cause of Prussia and of Germany was a righteous cause, and I myself have always entertained the best hopes for them, but this sudden success quite takes one's breath away. The day of Wörth was glorious for Germany, quite as much because it was a triumph of patient preparation, as because of the great valour of the German troops."

The word "stupefaction" best describes the first impression made abroad by our victories and by our confident advance. Our hesitating friends and our secret enemies in all the states of Europe were forced to recognize that Germany, fighting without any allies, would bring about a new state of things in Europe. On the 14th of August somebody wrote from Austria: "However the fortune of war may in the near future cast its dice, one fact is established: Germany is prepared. The world will have to accustom itself to take into account the existence of a great, united Germany. And this, we hope, will not be difficult, for Germany, by reason of her whole moral and social life, and of her army so constituted that it deeply affects every grade of society, threatens no danger to any of her neighbours."

The very first gusts of the storm of war in the month of July had broken down those moral and political barriers between North and South Germany, which had been artificially erected and maintained by so much rhetoric. When, crossing the Rhine, the army advanced into France, when all the sons of Germany followed the same glorious standard, and all friends at home closed up their ranks like one great family, rejoicing over the victories and bemoaning the heavy losses,—then those who lived beside the Isar and the Neckar, the Elbe and the Oder were knitted together by so firm a bond that no petty calculation of separatist advantage, no sullen reminiscences of former disunion were able to sever it. South Germany found herself lifted at one bound out of a very painful anomalous position on to the firm foot-hold of a New Germany, so that she had once more her full share of achievement and of joy in glory and good fortune. A noble jealousy for the grandeur of the common fatherland buried all quarrels in a happy oblivion.

Never yet had the tribes of North and South Germany, the men of Silesia, Posen, Westphalia, Hessen, Thuringia, Nassau, Bavaria, Franconia, the Palatinate and Suabia, been brought so closely together as they were by carrying on war side by side in the vast organism of the Third Army, with its multifarious work common to all, its marches, bivouacs and interchange of duties. In times of peace much had been said and sung, talked and dreamt of the greatness of a United German Fatherland. War works more quickly. These aspirations were with gigantic steps approaching realisation. Every one was aware of it: there, within the hostile camp, lies the reward for all our harsh war-service, the Unity and Grandeur of the German nation. The North German Reichstag, on the 19th of July, said it plainly in its reply to the speech from the throne: "Germany will on the battle-field find the basis of its Unity." Some decades before, in the midst of the popular passions of 1848 and '49, among all its straining and longing, Bismarck had uttered the words: "If German Unity is to be created, there must be a clash of arms."

* * *

The famous battle-painter G. Bleibtreu, in a letter to his wife, describes the impression made by these events: "What have I not gone through! That was a

day! that of Wörth! All the terrors I had witnessed in Bohemia were nothing by the side of that. God has graciously saved me amid shells and chassepot-bullets. I could not help it, I was driven by an irresistible impulse from within; how could I do other than take a near view of that struggle of United Germany, which turned all dreams into reality? I screamed with delight, surrounded as I was by all the terrors of the battle, when I witnessed the South Germans, in emulous competition with their North German brethren, press forward towards the heights and over them. I must go, I can write no more."

On the 5th of December, 1871, General von Hartmann, Commander of the IInd Bavarian Corps, wrote to Bleibtreu: "It was a heart-stirring thought for me that I had been present at the battle of Waterloo in 1815, and that I had in 1870/71 led an Army Corps against the enemy, on the 6th of August, in my 76th year; that I had remained on horse-back for fully 17 hours, at Fröschweiler, Reichshofen and Niederbronn, and had had no food all day except a piece of the privates' black bread. I was enabled to do this by the great cause for which I fought. On my jubilee-day, on the 1st of December, all the cherished reminiscences of the campaign, of the kindness and hearty sympathy which was shown me in every quarter, and especially by the Crown Prince, came back to me and found expression in words of heart-stirring joy and deep gratitude. The wreath of laurel which my most gracious master sent me at Chatenay, by his Excellency General Blumenthal, lies in my room, on a vase made by Benvenuto Cellini, and the Prince's honour-conferring words, carefully framed, are hung up near it. I thank the Almighty for this beautiful evening of my life, and my prayer is that it may in no way be embittered."



CHAPTER IV

FROM SPICHEREN TO VIONVILLE

By HANS VON KRETSCHMAN, GENERAL OF INFANTRY.

THE BATTLE OF SPICHEREN

A TRAVELLER crossing the River Saar at Saarbrücken and ascending the somewhat steep heights of the southern slope from the valley, gains a strikingly beautiful view of the surrounding landscape. A zone of luxuriant woodland enframes a region of hills of gentle ascent. To the right, the railway and the highway lead to the mighty iron-works of Stiring-Wendel and the towers of Forbach. To the left, the road leads up the river to Saargemünd. Between, there is at first a gentle descent down to the valley, and thence a pretty steep terraced acclivity, up to the heights of Spicheren; these heights gave to the battle of Spicheren its special characteristic.

From the midst of a wood-clad mountain-ridge appears first a rocky cone, the Rote Berg (Red Mountain): rising steeply, it gives the impression of a mighty bastion, which commands, far beyond Saarbrücken, all the country lying in front of it. From this centre stretch, right and left, wooded slopes so lofty that the view to the River Saar is nowhere obstructed. To ascend the Rote Berg it is best, first, to follow the highway to Stiring, and, turning off at the toll-house, to ascend the forest-clad slope, which is here gentle. The traveller will then find himself at the back of the high ground. There is also a direct road up the hill over the rock itself, only just wide enough for a single carriage to pass and difficult even for a pedestrian; it is not likely that this road has often been used for a vehicle of any kind.

On this beautiful plot of ground weak German detachments had ever since the 17th of July been facing a French army-corps. Here Colonel von Pestel with the Hohenzollern Fusiliers and his Rhenish Uhlans had gained a glorious name. On the 2nd of August the first combat of the Franco-German War had taken place here. It had consisted of the advance of Frossard's Corps towards the River Saar at Saarbrücken, and the temporary occupation of the town. The only result of this unequal contest was that it furnished one proof amongst others of the uncertainty and indecision of the French commanders. When on August 4th the French received the news of their defeat at Weissenburg, General Frossard abandoned all idea of making an attack. From that moment the German commanders ruled all the operations of the war, and the French had to act in accordance with the German initiative. This seizure of the initiative was our first and by no means our least important success.

It was the intention of the King first to place his three armies in line, and then "to seek the main forces of the enemy and attack them, wherever they were found." An isolated advance of an army or of a corps might lead to some mischance, which

must be carefully avoided, especially at the beginning of the war. In the decisive battle, which was wished for and expected soon to occur, all three armies were to have taken part, but the co-operation of the First and Second Armies was to be secured in any case. According to the intentions of the Great Headquarters these armies were not to cross the Saar and make their attack, before the action of the Third Army could become effective.

In front of the First Army (that of General von Steinmetz) and of the Second Army (that of His Royal Highness Prince Frederick Charles) the 5th and 6th Divisions of Cavalry had been pushed forward towards the Blies and the Saar. In the course of August the 3rd the cavalry reported that there were nowhere any indications of an intended attack by the enemy, by way of continuing the battle of Saarbrücken of the previous day; that up to the Saar and the Blies no enemy was to be seen, and there was also no appearance of a serious advance of the hostile forces in



STORMING OF THE ROTE BERG.

the direction of the Palatinate. Whilst the Second Army was still on its march forwards towards the Saar, the First Army had already assembled and taken up a flank-position along that river, but was moved from the line of Losheim—Wadern to that of Tholey, in order to facilitate the junction of the two armies. Both eagerly desired to measure swords with the enemy. It must not be inferred that the Germans were as yet convinced of their superiority over the French; there was a longing for battle, as may well be guessed, in order to shake off the oppressive feeling which weighed on men's minds, till the first decisive event had taken place.

The battle of Spicheren, on August the 6th, had been neither planned nor desired by the German commanders. Two men are responsible for it. Lieutenant-General von Kameke, Commander of the 14th Division of Infantry, and Lieutenant-General von Alvensleben the IInd (Constantin), the General commanding the IIIrd Corps,—the former for beginning it, the latter for bringing it to an issue.

The 14th Division was to have advanced on the 6th of August as far as Gnichen-

bach; the southern edge of the Köllerthal wood was to have been guarded by outposts in the direction of the Saar and Saarbrücken, but the river was not to have been crossed on that day.

On the 4th of August General Frossard, Commander of the French IInd Corps, had considered his position before Saarbrücken to be already so dangerous, that he announced to the Imperial Head-Quarters his intention of falling back to the heights of Spicheren, and in the course of the 5th of August this movement was executed. The 9th Division (Laveaucoupet) pitched its camp on these heights and occupied the Rote Berg, which was strengthened by shelter-trenches. Of Vergé's Division, one brigade took up position between the high-road to Forbach and the iron-works; here also hasty field-works were constructed. During the whole war the French infantry shewed great skill in making entrenchments, and they did this even in the heat of action. The 2nd Brigade, the Cavalry and the Reserve Artillery occupied Forbach, to protect the stores collected there. Bataille's Division was placed in reserve at Oetingen. The attack upon this fortified position was made all the more perilous by the fact that the left flank was exposed to a counterstroke from Montaudon's Division, encamped at a distance of barely 12 kilometres, ($7\frac{1}{2}$ Eng. miles) near Saargemünd. What might have been the issue of the battle, if this division had marched at once to the sound of the guns?

Behind Frossard's Corps, at a distance of 20 kilometres ($12\frac{1}{2}$ Eng. miles), the IIIrd Corps (Bazaine) occupied the line of Puttlinge—St. Avold. It also was near enough to support General Frossard after a short day's march, at latest on the evening of the day of battle.

A remarkable difference was observable throughout the whole Franco-German War: among the Germans everyone, even a single grenadier, would do his utmost to hurry forward to the sound of the guns; among the French no one stirred. On the 6th of August those corps of the enemy which could have annihilated us, stood with "ordered arms"; they joined in the retreat, but did not move a step forward. All the advantages of the ground, of superiority of force and position were on the side of the French. We could not see the enemy; whilst he, from his elevated position, had a full view of the country as far as, and beyond, the River Saar.

Our divisions of cavalry had endeavoured to remedy this defect by an audacious advance upon the hostile position. They reported with one accord that all along the line of the enemy a general retrograde movement had been going on ever since August the 5th, and that at Forbach preparations for entraining troops could be observed. On the morning of the 6th August the heights due south of Saarbrücken, hitherto occupied by infantry and artillery, had been evacuated; but it was found



GENERAL FROSSARD.

impossible to obtain more accurate information about the position of the enemy further west. Patrols of the 11th Hussars distinctly saw the camp at Forbach, and movements of troops in the direction of St. Avold. The general conclusion from all the reports was that, early on the 6th of August, large bodies of hostile troops were drawn up at Stiring-Wendel, Forbach and St. Avold, and that the enemy seemed inclined to withdraw. The bridges over the Saar had not been destroyed.

Lieutenant-General von Rheinbaben, who commanded the cavalry divisions assembled round Saarbrücken, rode through the town, and occupied, under a heavy artillery fire from the heights of Spicheren, the southern edge of the valley of the Saar, where the French outposts had stood the previous night.

Whilst these movements were being executed, the 14th Division advanced in the direction of Gnichenbach. The advance-guard, commanded by General von François,¹ consisted of the 39th Fusiliers, the first squadron of the 15th Hussars, the first light battery of the 7th Regiment of Field Artillery, and the first company of the 7th Battalion of Pioneers. The main body, the 74th, 53rd and 77th Regiments of Infantry, three squadrons of the 15th Hussars, one light and two heavy batteries of the 7th Regiment of Field Artillery was commanded by General von Woyna. General von Kameke, while on the march, learnt from cavalry reports that the enemy had withdrawn from their position close to Saarbrücken. He determined forthwith to march on, to occupy Saarbrücken and to advance his outposts to the opposite heights. This resolution was approved by von Zastrow, the General in command of the VIIth Corps, and he in consequence of the changed situation decided to move the whole corps to the River Saar.

The removal of the French from the valley south of Saarbrücken to the heights of Spicheren, was looked upon, not as a mere change of position, but as the beginning of a general retreat. An advance of the 14th Division across the Saar was sure to lead to a collision with the enemy. The orders of General von Kameke must be judged from the point of view that he thought that the enemy wished to fall back under the protection of a small rear-guard. This error as to the intentions of the enemy might easily have been fatal.

Three crests crown the edge of the valley of the Saar near Saarbrücken,—the parade-ground towards the west, on the road to Forbach, and towards the east the Reppertsberg and the Winterberg.

As soon as General von François reached the parade-ground at about half-past 11 in the morning, with the head of the advance-guard, consisting of the 3rd battalion of the 39th Regiment, the enemy opened a lively artillery fire from the Rote Berg, which was immediately answered at a distance of two kilometres (about 2000 yds.), by the 1st light battery. This was the beginning of the battle.

The 39th took up its position on the Reppertsberg. The 74th was also sent from the main body to the left bank of the river, the 2nd battalion was to guard the passage across the line of railway at Deutsch-Mühle, the other two formed up behind the 39th Regiment, so that General von François now had his brigade complete.

As none of the enemy's infantry could be seen anywhere, it seemed for a time,

¹ These men with French names in Prussian service are mostly descendants of French Huguenots driven into Prussia by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, 1685. [*Trs.*]

as if the battle would not assume a serious character. There was all the less occasion for anxiety because both the 13th Division and the VIIIth Army Corps were advancing towards the River Saar. As yet General von Kameke was not aware of the possibility, that the IIIrd Corps might also be counted upon; in any case he could not assume that the IIIrd Corps would act as decisively as it in fact did in the course of the afternoon.

Towards midday the three batteries of the main body appeared on the Reppertsberg, and opened fire so effectively against the enemy from the Winterberg, a distance of 1800 paces, that his artillery had to fall back into a more sheltered position. At the same time General von Kameke ordered an attack on the Rote Berg, to drive away the enemy's artillery,—and as no infantry had yet made its appearance, it seemed probable that it was only a contest with a rear-guard. The intention of General von François was to seize the left flank of the French position on the Spicheren heights with two battalions of his brigade, and the right flank with two other battalions, and to keep two battalions in reserve on the Reppertsberg. These movements necessarily led to the breaking up of the Division and to an excessive extension of the front. Moreover, the attack was directed against the Rote Berg, that part of the French position which offered the greatest difficulties in every way. Nevertheless, the fact that at the beginning of the war German soldiers had taken this mighty rock-fortress by assault and that German artillery had been planted upon it, gave us that joyous audacity which subsequently carried us on through all France.

The battalions assigned for the attack on the left wing of the French were soon engaged round the Stiring copse, in a bloody contest which was full of alternating vicissitudes. A hot artillery fire, both from the heights of Spicheren and from Stiring, tore bloody gaps through our columns. At about half-past one the French Brigade (Jollivet) made an outflanking attack upon our battalions and forced them back. Then companies of the 74th Regiment throw themselves upon the right flank of the hostile brigade, and compel the enemy to leave the Stiring copse in our hands. Further in advance, on the other side of the railway, the 2nd battalion of the 74th Regiment holds the mounds formed of the débris of some old coal-mines, as well as the embankment of the railway east of Alt-Stiringen.

Colonel von Eskens moved with two battalions of the 39th Regiment against the right wing of the French. In the course of a struggle lasting for two hours these troops ascend the slopes of the Stift wood and the Gifert wood, force back the 40th Regiment of the French and reach the southern edge of the Gifert wood. Here their advance is stopped. The enemy's artillery overwhelms the 39th Regiment with shells, and from the Rote Berg in rear, volleys of the 10th Regiment of French Chasseurs are poured into them. Michelet's Brigade advances to the attack. Only with difficulty and many bloody hand-to-hand struggles did our fusiliers maintain themselves on the ridge of the Gifert wood, a position to which they had been slowly forced back by the great numerical superiority of the enemy.

Soon after one o'clock General von François advanced upon the Rote Berg at the head of only five companies of the 74th Regiment. As these troops begin to descend the southern slope of the Reppertsberg they are met by a hail of bullets from the French artillery and infantry. They reach the foot of the Rote Berg and find cover, in huddled groups, under the stony precipices; it had the appearance of swallows'

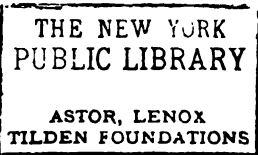
nests clinging to the rock. To support this attack, batteries of the main body had advanced to the Galgenberg and the Folster heights; their effective fire quickly silenced the French artillery on the Rote Berg and compelled it to fall back, leaving five pieces of artillery standing between the German and French lines of skirmishers.

Meanwhile General von Woyna had advanced with the 28th Brigade and the 53rd and 77th Regiments along the railway and the Stiring copse, and made perceptible progress in his endeavours to outflank the left wing of the enemy. General von Kameke accordingly renewed his order to take the Rote Berg. This was about 3 o'clock. General von François immediately led in person the five companies (the 9th of the 39th, the 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th of the 74th Regiments) to the assault, over the steep rocky slopes of the hill. Ascending with hard toil from ledge to ledge, they got nearer and nearer the highest ridge. After a few minutes the most advanced shelter-trenches are reached, and the French Chasseurs, evidently taken by surprise, are expelled after a short resistance, and fall back behind the nearest feature of the ground.

The General again puts himself at the head of his men, and with uplifted sword, leads this small band to meet the enemy; pierced by five bullets he falls and dies, with the words: "Death on the battle-field is beautiful; I die gladly, seeing t. t the battle is advancing." His brave fusiliers could not advance and would not fall back. They steadfastly held their ground beside their dead leader. Whoever was present on the 6th of August, 1870, on the top of the Rote Berg, will have two pictures indelibly imprinted on his memory: one of the fallen Prussian General with drawn sword in his hand; the other that of four French greys, in a gun-team, all killed by a single shell, which had torn off the back part of the centre horses and the heads of the wheelers.

During the progress of these events the 39th Regiment can hardly defend itself in the Gifert wood against the superior forces of the enemy. Their ammunition is beginning to run short, and their leaders are falling. Three fresh French battalions storm against their front and left flank, and in a furious combat the 39th is at last driven back. The enemy follows to the northern edge of the Gifert wood; here he halts, and sends a rapid and destructive fire after the 1st battalion of the 39th, which is retreating towards the Winterberg. The 2nd battalion of the same regiment maintains itself, in contempt of death, on the right, facing the 40th French Regiment in the Gifert wood. Extended, as it was, over a front of nearly 6000 paces, ¹ the 14th Division was at that moment in urgent need of support. Every moment it was to be expected that the far superior forces of the enemy would, in a general advance, drive back the feeble foremost line of fight and pierce it. Along the whole line of its extended position the 14th Division was nowhere able to make an attack, and its left wing had already been driven in. The danger of this situation was met by the arrival of fresh troops. Prince Frederick Charles was advancing with the corps of the Second Army from Mayence, towards the River Saar; the array of this army was to have been completed by the 7th of August. In the first line stood General von Alvensleben with the IIIrd Corps, which by order of the Commander-in-Chief was to reach the neighbourhood of Neunkirchen on the 6th of August, the day of the battle of Spicheren, as it turned out.

¹ Nearly 3 miles. [*Trs.*]





THE 12TH REGIMENT STORMING THE LEFT SLOPE OF THE ROTE BERG.

It is a peculiarity of men of a high order of intelligence, that, by anticipating events, they, as it were, see into the future, and, doing so, use their utmost endeavour to play their part in shaping it.

General von Alvensleben had a clear knowledge of what was impending during the time preceding the 6th August, and spared no pains in moving his corps with all speed up to the River Saar. On the 4th of August General von Stülpnagel was already with the 5th Division of Infantry at Neunkirchen, and General von Buddenbrock with the 6th at St. Wendel. The 5th Division consisted of the Regiment of Life Guards, the 48th, 12th, 52nd Regiments, 3rd Jäger Battalion, 12th Regiment of Dragoons, 1 (unmounted) Field-Division of the 3rd Artillery Regiment and the 3rd Company of Field-Pioneers, and had been ordered to advance on the 6th of August to within one German mile (nearly 5 Engl. miles) of Saarbrücken, while the 6th Division and the Corps Artillery were to follow as far as Neunkirchen.

Thus General von Alvensleben was able, by his independent action, to take an effective and decisive part in the battle of Spicheren; it became possible for 14 battalions, 4 squadrons, and 6 batteries of the IIIrd Corps to join in the severe struggle of the 14th Division, and as the result of a bloody self-sacrificing effort it was able, in conjunction with the advanced guard of the VIIIth Army Corps, to turn an all but lost battle into a victory.

General von Göben, the General in command of the VIIIth Corps, also hurried forward with his troops, being aware of an approaching battle. He had personally promised General von Kameke to support him. General von Barnekow, the Commander of the 16th Division, hearing that the guns had sounded the alarm, led his men on Saarbrücken. Being at a distance of 20 kilometers (12½ Engl. miles) from the field of battle, the main body of this division was unable to take part in the fight. But the 9th Regiment of Hussars had hastened forward with two batteries, and soon after 3 o'clock it arrived on the Reppertsberg. The latter took up their position on the Galgenberg. The infantry of the van-guard, the Hohenzollern Fusiliers, could not come up till about four o'clock, but the first battalions of the IIIrd Corps arrived soon after 3 o'clock.

The 9th Brigade of Infantry, was to have advanced on the 6th of August as far as Dudweiler, near Saarbrücken; General von Döring, its commander, had ridden far in front of his troops, crossed the Saar, and quickly discovered, that the 14th Division was engaged with the superior forces of an enemy eager for battle. Accordingly he



LIEUTENANT-GENERAL KONSTANTIN V. ALVENSLEBEN.

ordered his brigade to advance upon Saarbrücken by a forced march. General von Stülpnagel approved this order, and added in his report to General von Alvensleben: "I will bring on all the troops I can." The IIIrd Corps received, together with this report, Prince Frederick Charles's order to occupy Saarbrücken on the 6th of August.

General von Alvensleben had just reached his head-quarters at Neunkirchen, and at once took measures to forward his troops by the railway; the object being to bring into the battle-field that very day the last possible man of the corps. The 12th Regiment was immediately entrained at Neunkirchen, and all the troops were ordered by telegraph: "Move both by rail and road as strong as possible on Saarbrücken." The General himself with part of his staff travelled to St. Johann. The activity of the railway officials deserves to be mentioned with all praise; they were deeply impressed with the idea that they were taking their share in the defence of the country. The express train flew along like a storm-wind, and its conductor declared that he had never yet travelled so fast, and would probably never do so again. From St. Johann, General von Alvensleben galloped to the field of battle.

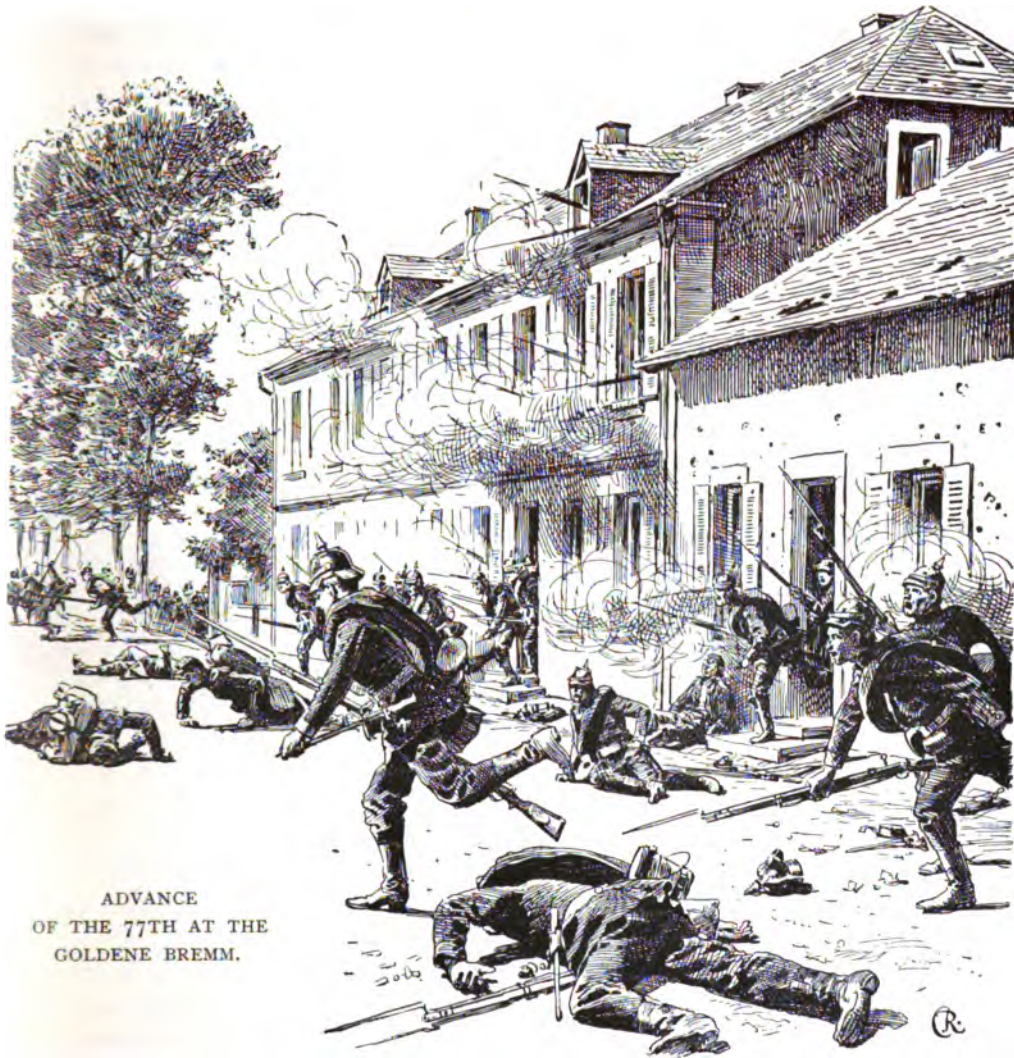
On the Galgenberg, near a battery of the 1st Corps, which, instead of detraining at Bingerbrück, had, upon hearing the news of the battle, travelled as far as St. Johann, the Commanding Generals of the VIIth, VIIIth and IIIrd Corps met the Commander of the 14th Division. It was obvious that the battle had to be begun afresh, and as the IIIrd Army Corps were the only troops available for that purpose General von Alvensleben assumed the chief command. From this time forward no other General issued any further orders during the whole of the 6th of August. The batteries of the VIIth Corps, as they arrived, were expressly put under the orders of General von Bülow, the commander of the artillery of the the IIIrd Corps.

General von Alvensleben saw that on the left wing, the battalions of the 39th Regiment, which had been repulsed, were arriving at the Winterberg. In the centre, on the Rote Berg, the battle was increasing in intensity; strong reserves of the enemy were seen approaching. On the right wing the attack had met with very poor success. It is true that General von Woyna was still in possession of Alt-Stiringen; he had been able to maintain himself in the Stiring copse against the advance of the whole of Vergé's Division, and to occupy the several farms along the main road, but here, as elsewhere, all further progress had become impossible; he was barely able to repel the furious attacks upon the copse.

General von Alvensleben, partly from what he saw, partly from reports, decided to capture the Forbach height, from the side of the Goldene Bremm, a farm on the main road, to which it will be necessary often to refer. For this purpose it was essential first to ensure the retention of two points: the Goldene Bremm and the Rote Berg, and then to combine all the disposable forces in an attack upon the heights. As an illustration of the nature of the scenes now under view, the following fact will speak for itself. It was observed that on the Rote Berg there was a line of Jägers in skirmishing order, which gave no sign of any kind. To his deep grief the General discovered that it consisted of soldiers who had already spent their lives in defence of the country.

General von Döring had led forward against the Gifert wood those battalions of the 48th Regiment which had arrived first, and driven the enemy back to his shelter-trenches. To the right the 3rd battn. of the 40th Regiment moved against the

Rote Berg, while other forces attacked its left flank; the 1st battalion of the 12th Regiment, which had just arrived on the battle-field, joined in the contest, together with the 40th and 48th Regiments. It was impossible to lead the battalions forward simultaneously; it was essential that each battalion should be employed as soon as it arrived. For this reason the success was not as great as it would have been, considering



ADVANCE
OF THE 77TH AT THE
GOLDENE BREMM.

the numbers engaged, seven battalions, which were afterwards joined by the 2nd battalion of the 12th and the 1st battalion of the Life-Guards. The battle swayed to and fro indecisively, with heavy losses.

It must be noticed that the majority of the battalions of the 5th Division were brought up by rail, with intervals of half an hour between the arrival of the several trains; the attacks of the French followed one another at the same half-hour intervals;

a circumstance which essentially influenced the employment of the troops. The battle in the Gifert wood and on the Rote Berg rages in wild confusion; troops of different brigades struggle for victory; a section in close order rushes forward, but it is not an ordinary unit: the Rhinelander has bravely joined the ranks of the Brandenburgers; the white uniform of the Hanoverian is seen side by side with the blue coat of the Rhinelander, and the red coat of the Brandenburger. No explanations whatever are exchanged; the thing to be done speaks for itself: All at the foe!

On the Rote Berg the five companies had been in urgent need of support ever since the death of their General, von François; ammunition began to run short, and it was owing to the exemplary bearing of the 74th and 39th Regiments alone, that the shelter-trenches previously seized on the extreme edge of the summit could be held. The enemy, greatly superior in numbers, occupied the shelter-trenches on the highest ridge of the hill, and was supported by batteries in action behind these. From this



BATTLE ON THE SUMMIT OF THE ROTE BERG.

strong position he sallied forth with great regularity, for attack after attack; he gained temporary possession of the south-west corner of the Gifert wood, but was every time finally repulsed and driven back to his heights.

Whilst the progress of the enemy was arrested at this point, the battle on our right wing took a less favourable turn. Up to this time the companies of the 74th Regiment, fighting at Alt-Stiring and by the coal-pits, had held their own, but now they observed far superior French columns making ready for attack; their retreat was threatened, and they, together with sections of the 39th, 53rd, and 77th Regiments, fell back upon Drahtzug. The seven companies of the 39th and 77th Regiments, which had possession of the southern edge of the copse, still held on, and repelled the furious rushes of the enemy, knowing all the while, that they could not hold out much longer.

In presence of this unfavourable position of affairs, General von Alvensleben felt the necessity of relieving the hard-pressed infantry by making more use of the batteries, which had hitherto been keeping up a continuous fire from the Galgenberg. He

decided to do this, and prepare for the attack on the Forbach heights by silencing the French artillery placed there. Every man fit to bear arms, foot or horse, had to be employed unsparingly. The General ordered the nearest body of men that was in close order, the Brunswick Regiment of Hussars, to advance against the Rote Berg. The regiment clambered up the hill, but on arriving on the top it could not deploy; shells and infantry bullets fired at close range tore through its ranks—cavalry could do nothing here and the hussars turned about. General von Bülow then asked leave to move guns on to the Rote Berg; the 3rd light and the 3rd heavy batteries—the names of the two captains, Stumpf and Voss, must be recorded—received orders to struggle up by the same path that the hussars had just come down. Straining every nerve of man and horse, every moment in danger of slipping and falling down the precipice, the artillerymen succeed in their task. Wherever it was possible to put a hand to the spokes of the wheels, or the traces of the horses, gunners and infantry together helped to pull up the guns. First came a single gun; it was received with a joyous hurrah! and immediately opened fire. During the advance our artillery had lost some of their men and horses, but their sudden appearance had an effect on the enemy all the more overwhelming, because he had altogether left out of calculation the possibility of it. At last he fell back behind the shelter-trenches, and it was possible to engage the enemy's artillery on the Pfaffenberg and Forbach heights. The eight batteries which had advanced with the same object from their position on the Galgenberg to the Folster heights, joined. The battle of Spicheren is thus kept alive; but victory has yet to be won.

General von Alvensleben had, with his wonted perseverance and tenacity, adhered to his original plan of deciding the battle by storming the heights of Forbach from the side of the main-road, thus assailing them from our right flank. For this purpose he collected on the Reppertsberg a reserve, formed out of the battalions which successively arrived, persistently refusing to employ them for any other purpose, no matter how urgent.

Towards 6 o'clock in the evening the following forces were concentrated at that point: the Fusilier Battalion of the 12th Regiment, the 2nd Battalion and the Fusilier Battalion of the Life-Guards, the 3rd Battalion of Jägers, and the 52nd Regiment,—in all 7 battalions. Towards evening two additional battalions, from the 20th Regiment, were able to come up. General von Schwerin was ordered to make the attack on the Forbach heights with these troops. He moved along the western foot of the Spicheren heights, in two columns, the 52nd Regiment being in the second line. From the Forbach heights the enemy's fire fell fiercely on our ranks, but our men did not send a single shot in reply. Suddenly a grenadier struck up "Die Wacht am Rhein", and six Prussian battalions, looking death in the face, joined in the patriotic song; the Brandenburgers charged singing. The slope was ascended from the side of the Goldene Bremm; from all directions the troops of the 14th Division joined in the attack. Colonel von L'Estocq, who led the first line, reached the Forbach height at the very time when Laveaucoupet's (French) Division was advancing for a renewed attack upon the Gifert wood and the Rote Berg. The appearance of Prussian troops on their left flank interrupted this mighty rush and soon forced the enemy to fall back once more behind the Pfaffenberg.

A tenacious and fierce resistance had to be overcome; our grenadiers arrived within 200 paces of the French artillery; the high plateau of Spicheren fell into our possession and was retained by us; the enemy retreated on all sides in disorder, leaving numerous prisoners in our hands.

The 52nd Regiment had not followed the first line of advance; when it was on the point of wheeling to the left by the Goldene Bremm the enemy opened upon it a murderous artillery-fire from Stiring-Wendel. General von Schwerin felt it to be his duty to encounter this new enemy with the second line. Meantime the advance of Bataille's (French) Division, which had been at first so successful, had been arrested by the shell-fire of the batteries on the Folster height. Accordingly, General von Woyna had once more led forward his troops from Drahtzug and the Stiring copse; this brought him on to the right of the 52nd Regiment as it was preparing to attack Stiring-Wendel.

Incessant volleys of musketry were poured thence into the ranks of the attacking force; once more the batteries at Stiring joined in with all their strength, but they were silenced by the 2nd light battery of the 14th Division, which was in action near the Goldene Bremm. The 39th and 77th Regiments seized the iron huts of the



CAPTURE OF FRENCHMEN ON THE SPICHEREN HEIGHTS.

foundry at Stiring; every heap of slag was occupied by hostile skirmishers and had to be stormed. Whilst this was going on, the 52nd Regiment on the left hurled the enemy back with a mighty rush. Our swarms of skirmishers entered Stiring-Wendel, where part of the defenders offered a resolute resistance, and part, wearied out, fell back. General von Schwerin ordered the advance upon the west side of the place to be made with shouts of "Hurrah." Thereupon all resistance on the part of the French ceased, and they quitted the field. From the Spicheren heights also their buglers were sounding "retire," announcing in wailing notes the loss of the battle. Our troops, spent by the persistent and tenacious fight, stood in strangely mingled masses amidst the tents of the hostile camp in a long line from Spicheren as far as Stiring. A reserve had been formed on the Rote Berg, consisting of battalions that, by exhausting the limits of physical endurance, had succeeded in reaching the battle-field; the 2nd battalion of the 53rd Regiment, for example, had marched 50 kilometers (31 miles)

in 13 hours. Meanwhile darkness had set in. Below, by the Goldene Bremm, General von Döring having gathered about him a motley body of all regiments and companies, drew them up in line and addressed them: "Steady, my lads! Not a shot! We stick to the enemy and we take Forbach." The spirit of the battle of Waterloo had seized him; Gneisenau, Blücher's chief of the staff, had there pursued the defeated Emperor Napoleon, having at his side a drummer-boy mounted on a Uhlan's horse, beating all the time "advance at the double."

The 13th Division, which was to have reached Völklingen on the 6th of August, had marched to the sound of the guns, although the troops had been on their legs since 5 o'clock in the morning. The appearance of this division at Forbach in the rear of the enemy might have converted this defeat into a disaster. Our hussars reported that the town was entrenched and occupied, and General von Glümer immediately ordered the attack. Only two squadrons of the 12th Regiment of French dragoons, (and it is only just that their brave commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Dulac, should be named,) and about 300 men of the French Reserve, who had arrived by chance, held the shelter-trenches. Already darkness had set in. A rain of bullets received our Jägers and 55th Regiment. The French infantry, outflanked by superior forces and threatened in the rear, began to give way; then their dragoons mounted and flung themselves upon our skirmishers, who annihilated them by their fire at close quarters.



SOLDIERS' GRAVE ON THE SPICHEREN HEIGHTS.

When during the night of the 6-7th August General von Alvensleben, after his glorious victory, thought over the course of events, he said, and indeed wrote, to his Commanding Officer, Prince Frederick Charles: "It was not the Prussian General, it was the Prussian soldier that defeated the enemy." 223 officers and 4648 men had purchased this success with their blood; the 12th Regiment alone lost 53 officers and 771 men; the 74th Regiment, 36 officers and 661 men.

No one who was on the battle-field of Spicheren on the 6th of August, 1870, and saw Saarbrücken after the battle, will ever forget the self-sacrificing manner in which the inhabitants, high and low, rendered help to the combatants. Ladies, whether dressed in silk or wearing the apron of labouring women, appeared amidst the lines, distributing bread and wine. Every wounded soldier will think of Saarbrücken with gratitude.

If the question is asked, why the French were beaten on the 6th of August, seeing that they were in superior numbers and in the strongest position conceivable,

the short answer is found in the simple picture of what happened at the moment of the first gun-shot; every German soldier that heard it, whether General or Private, hastened to the battle-field and spent his last breath to reach it; the French troops, on the contrary, remained motionless and impassive where they were. During the whole battle General von Alvensleben was haunted by keen anxiety, caused by his knowledge of the position of a French division at Saargemünd (Saarguemines) on his left flank, almost on his rear. Our dragoons in front met with hostile cavalry after a few minutes' ride; nevertheless, neither did Montaudon's Division move from Saargemünd, nor Marshal Bazaine from St. Avold, both being able to reach the field after a three hours' march.

The victorious "Hurrah!" of the Germans from Wörth and Spicheren reached Vienna and Florence. The defeated Emperor Napoleon no longer found a friendly hand held out to him, nor did the French Army find auxiliaries. Austria and Italy abandoned the idea of arresting our arms. In the German homes the spell which had oppressed our people was broken.

That was the net outcome of the battle of Spicheren. The whole French Army which, amidst the applause of the nation, had set out for Berlin, was retreating upon Paris. From Spicheren, Saargemünd and St. Avold the French marched incessantly during the night of the 6th-7th of August in the direction of Metz.

The King intended that the German Army should advance upon Metz by wheeling round one-eighth of a circle, the First Army forming, so to speak, a movable pivot. It was reasonable to assume that the enemy would offer a decisive battle on the Moselle, and the plan was that the First Army, moving forward by the shorter route, should engage him in front, whilst the Second Army should outflank him and attack him from the south. This plan determined the movements of the troops for some days to come.

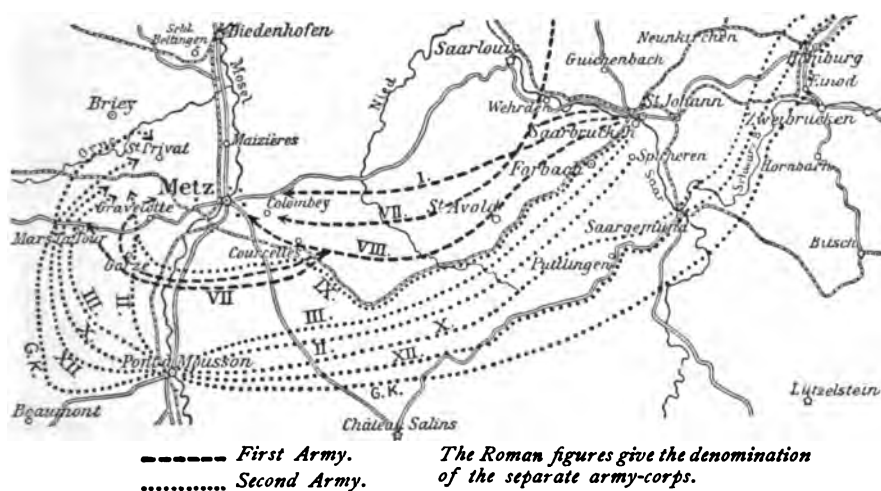
The First Army and the IIIrd Corps were busy during the 7th of August in bringing to the field the troops that were still in rear, and in having the retreating enemy watched by their cavalry. Up to the 9th of August Prince Frederick Charles was engaged in concentrating, as they gradually arrived, all his corps behind the line of the River Saar at Saarbrücken, Saargemünd and Rohrbach, placing the 6th Division of Cavalry in advance of the right wing, the 5th in advance of the left wing. From the unanimous reports of the cavalry who were hastening forward along every road, it was clear that the enemy was marching upon Metz.

As a matter of fact, the Emperor Napoleon, stunned by two simultaneous defeats, had on the 7th of August already determined upon a general retreat of his whole army upon Châlons. On his arrival at Metz, political reasons compelled him to abandon this plan; French public opinion, which could not endure the idea that the French Army should retreat before the hated Germans, overbore the purely military considerations, and the French Commanders resolved to accept another battle east of Metz.

After their junction the First and Second Armies received, on the evening of the 9th of August, orders to move forward towards Metz; the right wing of the Second army was directed to march along the Saarbrücken—St. Avold—Noméry road, which thus formed the boundary line of the two armies. The roads travelled by the retreating enemy presented appalling sights. Stragglers were picked up everywhere,

wretched fellows who were sick of the war and never thought of honour or country; everywhere knapsacks thrown away testified to the loss of discipline; everywhere abandoned camps were to be seen, leaving unanswered the question: "Why did you not fight?" The 15th Regiment of Uhlans, commanded by Colonel von Alvensleben, moved in front of the IIIrd Corps on as broad a front as possible. The horsemen galloped with audacious daring right into the midst of the foe, and woe! wherever the yellow Uhlan shewed himself. Our troops, following these covering parties, marched in perfect calm. Every report was sent on with the words: "The Report is correct. von Alvensleben," or, "Report doubtful, will examine personally." Not for one moment was the column of march disturbed. Every movement of the French was observed and reported.

The victories of Weissenburg, Wörth and Spicheren had aroused in the whole German Army an enthusiastic assurance of victory. The mere uninterrupted retreat of the French from the Saar to the Moselle, past intrenched and abandoned camps,



ROUTE TO METZ.

could not but create in the German army a sense of great superiority, and stimulate the desire to stop the enemy's flight and force him to accept battle.

In accordance with the King's plans, both armies, curtailed by cavalry, advanced upon the Moselle, the First by easy, the Second by forced marches.

On the 14th of August the First Army had the Ist and VIIth Corps along the French Nied, with outposts beyond the river in the direction of Metz. The VIIIth Corps was in reserve in rear. During the 7th of August touch with the enemy had been lost owing to the rapid retreat of the French, but close contact was now secured along the whole front of the First Army. On the 14th of August the Second Army continued the wheel to the right, the First Army forming its fixed pivot. The left wing, consisting of the Guards and the Xth Corps, had advanced furthest to the west, being on the Moselle at Dieulouard and Pont-à-Mousson. The IVth was more to the rear at Armancourt. The IIIrd and IXth Corps were on the left of the First Army at Luvigny and Béchy, behind them the Saxon Corps at Solgne and the IInd Corps

at Faulquemont. The independent divisions of cavalry moved in front of the army. As early as the 14th of August some of General von Rheinbaben's squadrons made their appearance on the left bank of the Moselle, along the roads leading to the Maas, whilst others advanced along the valley of the Moselle towards Metz. The 6th Division of Cavalry, that of Duke William of Mecklenburg, was able to report that the enemy as yet gave no sign of movement from Metz.

* * *

THE BATTLE OF COLOMBEY.

At Metz the French had at their disposal an army of 200,000 men, and had no reason to doubt their success. They had determined to hold a position west of the French Nied, and had occupied it on the 10th of August, although it was obvious on the very first day, that tactically it was unfavourable. Accordingly the plan was again changed, and a closer concentration near the fortress was decided on. This vacillation in the chief command, so pernicious to the French, was to some extent terminated on August 12th, when the Emperor Napoleon resigned his post at the head of the army, appointed Marshal Bazaine Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Rhine, and prepared to depart from the seat of war. But as he could not return to Paris without having gained a victory, he remained with the army for a time. His presence could not but paralyze the resolves of his generals, all the more so as he was surrounded by a crowd of irresponsible advisers. All the men of light and leading in the French army had long been convinced of the necessity of a retreat upon Châlons, in order to combine the forces of MacMahon with those of Bazaine. But if this retrograde movement appeared inevitable, then any delay in the neighbourhood of Metz could not but be fatal. It is probable that the Emperor, on resigning his command, had ordered the departure of the Army of the Rhine for Verdun.

Originally Bazaine had urged upon the Emperor the necessity of making an attack upon the foe. He had thought it advantageous to take the offensive at the time when his opponent was still engaged in executing a flank movement. A part of the French Generals approved of these plans, and it must not be overlooked that the Chief of the German General Staff, von Moltke, had the contingency of a French attack upon his First Army steadily before his mind during all these days. But Bazaine's advice did not prevail. Two more days having been allowed to slip by without action, the order for retreat was at last given on the 13th of August; it was to be begun on the following day, but it was no longer possible to calculate on its undisturbed execution, seeing that the enemy was already close at hand. The orders given for retreat ran a great risk of becoming impossible to carry out, because of the three available routes only two were selected, and the northernmost, which was remote from German interference, was ignored. One of the French columns was directed to march along the road leading to Mars-la-Tour, which was already in possession of our cavalry. The order issued on the forenoon of the 13th of August was briefly this: "The 1st and 3rd Divisions of the Cavalry of the Reserve will leave their camp at 1 p.m. and move upon Verdun: the 1st Division by the road from Gravelotte, past Doncourt and Conflans; the 3rd by the road from Gravelotte, past Mars-la-Tour. The IIIrd and IVth Corps take the former, the IInd and VIth Corps the latter road. The

Guards follow the VIth corps." Hardly ever have orders been issued more carelessly than this was.

Metz, the chief bulwark of the eastern frontier of France, was not at all prepared for war, the fortress had to be protected by the army, not the army by the fortress. The Commandant declared that he could not hold the place for more than a fortnight. If the first condition of victory is determination to be victorious, then the French army was already defeated at the very commencement of its retreat. The vacillation of the commanders, for which the legs of the men had to suffer: one day an order to advance, without any firm resolve to meet the foe and defeat him; next day retreat, without having forced on a decisive battle; the example of the Emperor Napoleon, quitting the army;—all these had a depressing effect on the rank and file. The inactivity and irresolution of the days between the 7th and 14th August were the first steps which led to the subsequent defeats.

It was for reasons such as these that the French army did not begin to pass from the right to the left bank of the Moselle before midday of the 14th of August, and by the 16th this movement had not been completed. A sufficient number of bridges for the passage had not been prepared. The march through the narrow streets of the town was not regulated, and the defiles leading up to the edge of the valley were blocked by huge numbers of vehicles belonging to the baggage trains; the French themselves compared their baggage to that of Darius.

When these movements began, the German First Army had reached the French Nied, and its advanced detachments were trying to find out whether the enemy were retreating or about to advance to the attack. In this latter case the IIIrd and IXth Corps of Prince Frederick Charles's army were to move up, the former to Pagny on the road from Metz to Nancy, the latter to Buchy on the Strassburg road, so as to be able in case of a serious engagement to coöperate with the First Army.

The morning hours of August the 14th passed off quietly, but at 11 o'clock the cavalry reported that the enemy was breaking up his camp and marching away.

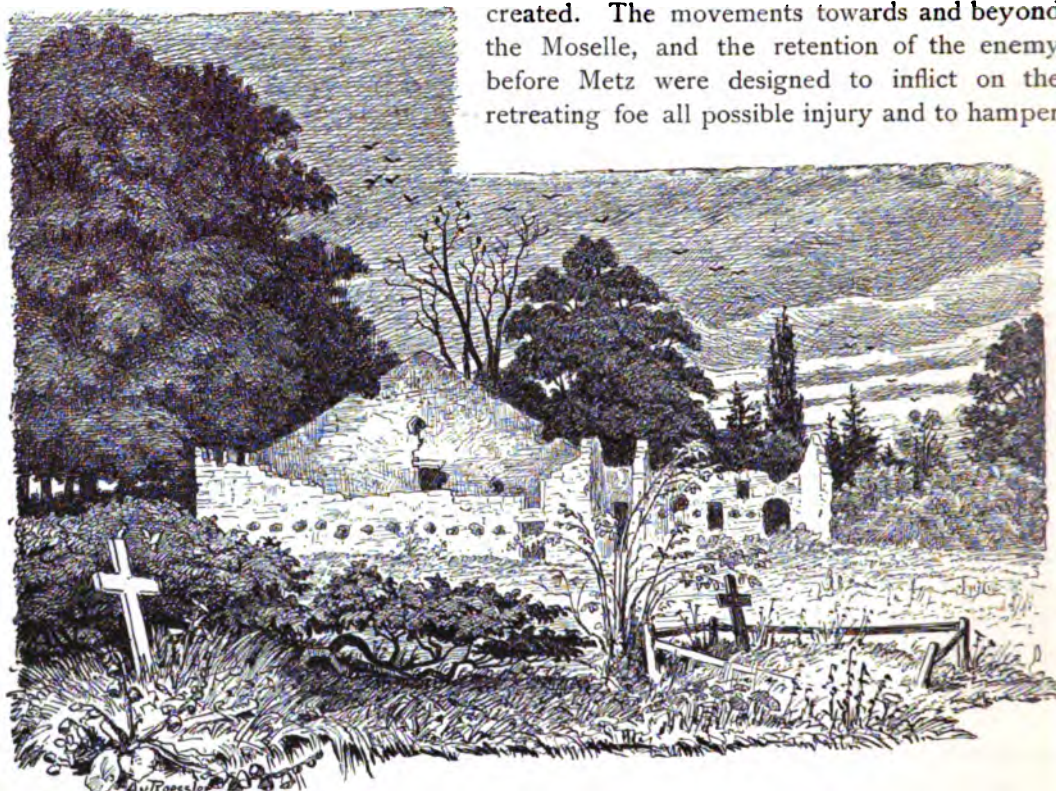
The Commanding General of the Ist Corps, Baron von Manteuffel, was at his outposts and observed the movements of the French masses in front of him. He had the alarm sounded, and made ready for action; for the enemy might intend to make an attack in concentrated force on the VIIth Corps, or upon the Second Army. The VIIth Corps was close to the Ist Corps. The Commander of the advance-guard of



MARSHAL BAZAINE.

the VIIth, General Baron von der Goltz, saw clearly that the enemy was abandoning his position in front of Metz and was retiring upon the fortress. He thought he was bound to act at once, especially as he inferred from hearing the "alarm" of the Ist Corps that it was about to attack. He therefore determined to fight, and so informed the Ist Corps. The responsibility for beginning the battle of Colombey rests solely with General von der Goltz.

Thus came about this battle, not desired by the Commander-in-Chief, but still in accordance with the situation which he had created. The movements towards and beyond the Moselle, and the retention of the enemy before Metz were designed to inflict on the retreating foe all possible injury and to hamper



FARM OF COLOMBEY NEAR METZ.

his operations. The resolve of General von der Goltz very considerably furthered this main purpose.

On the morning of the 14th of August the IInd Corps of the French (Frossard) formed the extreme right wing, covering the road to Strassburg, with its front towards the south: two divisions were in the first line and two in rear. The IIIrd Corps had its general front towards the east, from Grigy past Colombey and Montoy as far as Noisseville. The IVth Corps (Ladmirault) was behind the left wing of the IIIrd, at and behind Metz. The Vth Corps (Canrobert) was placed partly between the Moselle and the Seille, and partly on the left bank of the Moselle at Woippy. The Guards (Bourbaki) were posted behind the IIIrd Corps.

From early in the morning endless trains of carts and carriages travelled through

Metz from the right to the left bank of the Moselle. Towards midday the VIth, IIInd and IVth Corps on both wings began to move, but the IIIrd Corps and the Guards remained as yet stationary.

The scene of the battle of Colombey is the plateau to the east of Metz: it ascends gently from the south to the north, and especially in the northern half presents an extensive view over the whole field. The deep gorgelike valley of the River Vallière, first flowing northwards past Colombey and then turning westwards towards the Moselle, presents some noteworthy features, which mark off the whole into a smaller south-western and a larger north-eastern section. These are usually spoken of as that of Borny and that of St. Barbe. The positions of the French dominated all the country in front of them, and partly also the main line of march of the First Army.

Towards half-past three General von der Goltz started from his bivouac at Laquenexy with his advance-guard, the 15th and 55th Regiments, the 7th Battalion of Jägers, the 8th Hussars, and the 5th and 6th Light Batteries. He intended to capture the Colombey section. Having on his right the musketeer battalions of the 15th Regiment, and on his left the jäger battalion and the 6th light battery, the General presses forward towards Aubigny-Château and Colombey. The château is seized by an attack on the front and on both flanks; two companies occupy it and four others advance in the direction of La Ranchette on the Saarbrück road. The jäger battalion occupies Colombey and holds it against the attacks of the enemy. But the three battalions cannot advance further, for on the western slope of the valley the French are in heavy masses. General von der Goltz sees that the struggle is assuming a serious character, and at once calls up the batteries still in rear. A musketry fight, carried on with tenacity and with heavy losses, sways to and fro on the western side of the valley along the brook; the heights on the left wing taken on the first onset are held, but the right wing along the Saarbrück road meets with an insurmountable resistance, and in the distance the long lines of the IIIrd Corps are seen to be preparing by a destructive rapid fire for an outflanking attack, so as to regain the lost ground.

When the sound of the guns from the River Nied announced the beginning of the battle, the French retreating columns, troubled and wearied with marches and counter-marches, at once faced about and hastened to the battle-field, delighted with the prospect of the impending contest.

General von Manteuffel had pushed forward his advanced detachments from Silly and Les Etangs beyond the Nied, and had ordered them to join energetically in the battle, without, however, allowing themselves to be drawn within range of the fortress. The advance-guards of both divisions simultaneously moved along the two great highways which lead from the Nied to Metz; that of the first division from Silly was soon in touch with General Goltz; that of the second division marched from Les Etangs towards Noisseville. The batteries, covered by cavalry, galloped on in front of the infantry, which followed as fast as possible. From Montoy and the neighbourhood of Noisseville the three batteries opened fire. The infantry that was coming up and the musketeer battalions of the 44th occupied Nouilly, which the enemy had strongly barricaded and then abandoned; thence they maintained a hot and unequal contest against the heights of Mey, where the enemy in very superior numbers opposed them at a distance of barely 300 paces.

On the left wing of the 1st Corps Colonel von Busse advanced with the 43rd Regiment and two jäger companies, viâ Montoy, upon Lauvallier, occupied it, and endeavoured to ascend the western heights of the valley between the two great high-ways. Hostile shelter-trenches lay in terraces above one another, and an incessant musketry fire rolled down the slopes and struck down all who tried to ascend. The attempt to reach the great wayside cross at Bellecroix, where the Saarbrücken and Saarlouis roads join, failed. The enemy seemed to be intending to interpose from the direction of Bellecroix between the two divisions of the 1st Corps. The 4th Regiment hastened up, deployed on both sides of the Saarlouis road, and pressed forward towards the Lauvallier section with the intention of taking part in the contest going on on the slope on the opposite side of the valley. The first assault failed, the ridge partly taken had to be abandoned again.

The advance-guards of three divisions (13th, 1st and 2nd) had maintained, along the whole front from Colombey to Nouilly, till 6 o'clock, an indecisive and bloody fight, in which the artillery, as it arrived, took part. The guns, moreover, drive unhesitatingly right into the infantry fire, suffering heavy losses of men and making the service of the artillery very difficult; indeed a whole battery had to be removed to the rear by infantry, all its men having been killed after it had only fired off 28 shells: All the officers had fallen. Sixty guns keep up the fire against the heights on the left, between Colombey and Mey, which are still obstinately defended by the enemy.

The appearance of the 25th Brigade produces a complete change in the state of the battle on our left wing. The Commanding General of the VIIth Corps had reinforced the 26th Brigade by the 25th, and arranged for the rapid march of the 14th Division with the Corps Artillery to the heights of Laquenexy and Colligny. General von der Osten-Sacken had started on his march with the 25th Brigade (13th and 73rd Regiments) to Coincy, behind the left wing of General von der Goltz, and had there received orders to join in the battle at the Colombey brook; similar instructions were issued to the 14th Division, with the further order to leave the 27th Brigade as reserve between Colombey and Marsilly. The 1st battn. 13th Regt. hurries to the ground between Coincy and the Saarbrück road, ascends the left slope of the valley, loses in a few minutes its commanding officer and all its company leaders, but has gained its place in the foremost rank when the 1st battalion of the 73rd Regiment comes to its support. All the sections of the 13th, 15th and 73rd Regiments Westphalians and Hannoverians hurl themselves upon the overmastering foe. Heedless of his destructive fire, they drive him back, but the success gained cannot be maintained. The storming party, fired upon from three sides, had to fall back. Below, along the brook, the General again assembles his troops; the fusilier battalion of the 13th Regiment has just arrived and places itself at the head of the renewed attack. Every German still able to fight, voluntarily joins in the difficult assault. It succeeds, and at about 7 o'clock the position on the road from Colombey to Bellecroix, maintained with the utmost tenacity by the defenders, is in our hands, and the enemy falls back upon Borny. Neither Prussians nor French are willing to rest content with this result; the French are anxious to regain the lost position, the Prussians wish to press forward, but both are compelled to halt.

Whilst with the VIIth Corps the battle had taken a decided turn in favour of our arms, the state of affairs with the 1st Corps was far from being free from danger.

General Ladmirault had left a division at Mey to cover the retreat of the IVth Corps. As this division was scarcely able to maintain itself against the 44th Regiment, the other divisions of the corps and the reserve artillery faced about. In support of Grenier's Division, Cissey's Division advanced upon Mey, and at the same time, Lorencez's Division was ordered to outflank our right wing in the direction of St. Barbe.

To meet this new danger it was first of all necessary to bend round our right wing so as to form front towards the north, in sufficient strength to meet the threatened flank movement. Here appeared the 3rd Division of Cavalry, which had come up



LIEUTENANT-GENERAL V. BENTHEIM AT THE BATTLE OF COLOMBEY.

guided by the sound of the guns. Servigny was occupied and four batteries were posted near it, directing their fire against the threatening movement on the flank. Whilst these gave steadiness to our right wing, the artillery of the Ist Corps appeared in the centre. The three batteries of the 1st Division, which at first had fired from Montoy, galloped over the bridge from La Planchette and unlimbered just behind the skirmishers, at a distance of 1200 paces from the enemy, on both sides of the road to Metz. The brave gunners maintained this position to the end of the battle. The Corps Artillery which had been brought up, managed to find room to act against the flank movement threatening from the north. Forty-two guns took up a position with their front of fire northwards, close to the road to Saarlouis, the

right wing at Noisseville, the left near Lauvallier, so that 90 pieces of artillery poured shells over the French. Between Colombey and Mey our troops had, at about 7 o'clock in the evening, crossed the strong line of the brook. Their left flank was protected by the Jägers near Borny, and their right by the occupation of Servigny and Noisseville by the artillery and by the 3rd Cavalry Division.

Towards 7 o'clock the 28th Brigade of Infantry (53rd and 77th Regiments) appeared near the Jägers on our extreme left wing. The great disadvantage of a battle not previously planned was felt here as well as at Spicheren; it was not possible to bring about the decision by combined strong reserves, but supports had to be employed wherever necessary as fast as they arrived on the field. The 27th Brigade had been left as a general reserve between Marsilly and Colombey. General von Woyna,



GENERAL V. MEERSCHIEDT-HÜLLESSEM.

with the 15th Hussars to cover his left flank, advances with his four battalions towards the little wood of Borny and takes it, with the help of the Jägers; towards Grigy the brigade becomes engaged in a stationary musketry fight. General von Wrangel now appears beside this brigade, with his 18th Division; he, like the others, having been called to the field by the sound of the guns. After a forced march this division had on the afternoon of the 14th of August, bivouacked along the Strassburg road, having the 1st Division of Cavalry in front, watching Metz. About 5 o'clock the beginning of the battle was reported to them, and immediately General von Wrangel determined to hurry forward with his division northwards upon Peltre, which was found unoccupied by the enemy. In the march towards Grigy the 36th Regiment, leading the advance, gains

touch with General Woyna's troops, who were also advancing upon this place; thus attacked from the east and from the south the enemy gives way and falls back under the protection of the guns of Fort Queleu. We had to be content to pursue him with artillery fire. On this side our troops had advanced victoriously to within 2000 paces of the fortress.

The right wing meanwhile had to defend itself against the threatened flank movement and at the same time against the hostile attacks from the front. Seven battalions struggle with the foe on the narrow space on the heights between Belle-croix-Mey and Nouilly; neither party gives way. The 3rd Regiment, our oldest regiment of grenadiers, joined in from the direction of Montoy. After some refreshment it throws itself into the fight, which is swaying to and fro. The arrival of these fresh troops somewhat pushes forward the attack. It is a wild, stirring battle on

and round the heights of Bellecroix and Nouilly. Wherever our troops are threatened with being outflanked, they regard it as a signal for furious attack; it is as though every grenadier were a born General; he does of his own prompting the very opposite of what the enemy is justified in expecting him to do. Whoever attempts to outflank his enemy aims at compelling him to retreat, but our Grenadiers do not yield, and their resolute advance puts an end to all danger. The 3rd Regiment, together with companies of the 4th and 44th, advances victoriously upon the heights of Mey, and the village is taken after darkness has fully set in. The capture of Grigy on the left and of Mey on the right wing, both places beneath the guns of the fortress at a distance of less than 2000 paces, are historic proofs of our victory. During the decisive contest round Mey a reverse had taken place in the fight between Lauvallier and the mill at Goupillon. Deprived of their leaders and exhausted with the struggle, several parties of men had, in the darkness of the evening, subsided into the valley. General von Bentheim stops them, quickly re-establishes order in their ranks and leads them with drawn sword against the enemy, who now finally yields. Night has set in. The shells display gleaming fiery curves against the dark sky. The 1st and VIIth Corps are united on the battle-field, and late in the evening the last troops arrive with heaving sides, and among them the 1st battalion of the 41st Regiment. Led by Colonel von Hüllessem, it is, so to speak, the crowning witness that victory has been gained, for it ventures forward to the immediate neighbourhood of Fort St. Julien, and pours fire upon the hastily retreating troops of the enemy.

At 9 o'clock the battle was over. General von Steinmetz, the Commander-in-Chief of the First Army, was not able to take advantage of his victory, being hindered by the night and the immediate proximity of the fortress. He had, moreover, to take into account the possibility that the whole French Army of the Rhine might be concentrating for attack during the night, behind the line of forts. He therefore ordered that, for the sake of convenience, both corps should return to the positions they had held before the battle. This order was, however, only partly executed. Ere the first corps began to move, the band of the Crown-Prince Grenadiers struck up the tune, "God save the King", and the East-Prussian Regiments started on their night-march, singing the chorale, "Now praise we all our God." General von Zastrow caused the VIIth Corps to bivouac "Arms in hand," on the bloodily contested ground, so as "to leave no wounded man in the hands of the enemy, and to secure the honour of the possession of the field." The troops had neither wood nor straw; but one soldier struck up the tune, "Wir sitzen hier so fröhlich beisammen" (Here we sit so cheerily), and soon regiment after regiment joined in. These were songs of victory bought with the blood of 222 officers and of nearly 5000 men. It may well be asked what purpose is served by a battle where the hostile walls of a fortress preclude the exploitation of victory, and where the victorious troops have, after the battle, to be led back to the positions they had occupied in the morning. The object of war is to destroy the enemy's power and thus to compel him to do our bidding. The battle-field of Colombey, where the thousands of French soldiers had honourably fallen, contributed much to inspire us with assurance of victory, trust in our Commanders and with confidence in our own strength. Two French Corps had been overthrown, and the sense of German superiority rested like a nightmare on the whole French Army of the Rhine. For such gains it were well to fight another battle of Colombey in the future.

The battle of Colombey-Nouilly so delayed Bazaine's retreat upon Verdun, that it became possible altogether to stop him in the battle of Vionville, and afterwards, in the battle of Gravelotte, to carry out that outflanking and decisive attack from the west, in consequence of which the French Army of the Rhine was chained to Metz. Thus the events of August 14th form the first link of the great chain of contests round Metz, which led to its investment and the final surrender of the main army of France.



DEPARTURE OF KING WILLIAM FROM BERLIN
FOR THE SEAT OF WAR.

CHAPTER V

THE BATTLE OF VIONVILLE—MARS-LA-TOUR

By HANS VON KRETSCHMAN.

PREVIOUS TO THE BATTLE

THE battle of Vionville is called the battle of Prince Frederick Charles,¹ and might with equal justice be called the battle of the Brandenburgers; for it is a historical landmark that there, near Metz, the graves of the fallen Brandenburgers form the frontier between France and Germany.

Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia was then 42 years of age. Up to the war he was in command of the IIIrd Army Corps, and had trained it up to his ideal. The victories of the French over the Austrians in 1859, at Magenta and Solferino, had drawn the attention of military men to the French Army. Its superiority was freely and unconditionally admitted, and petty minds thought that the sure way to perfection was to imitate the French even in the most superficial details. To these opinions, ever gaining in volume and intensity as time went on, the Prince put a resolute check.

He perceived the danger that lay in this wide-spread belief in the invincibility of the French, and thought it his duty to resist it with all his power. In the winter of 1859/60 he read a paper to the officers of the Stettin garrison on the French method of fighting. This lecture was published under the title: "A Military Memorial" by P.F.K. (Prinz Friedrich Karl), and caused a great sensation, even in France. It must be remembered that every aspiring subaltern was looking with wondering eyes at the invincible French soldiers, to try to detect from them the secret of victory, and that it was upon this paralyzing state of things that the resounding voice of a Prussian Prince who seemed destined for a great future, burst, with the words, "We can do better." In this "Military Memorial" he says:

"It is only free men you can lead to victory—otherwise you will not lead victorious men."

"The soldier must be brought to the standpoint of being brave because he cannot help it, because his heart compels him. He must rise to the full consciousness that the Prussian soldier by his calling is the born defender of the Prussian flag, so that he may not consider himself released from duty when his commander is *hors de combat*, but may ever know how to bear arms in the name of his King, and may ever feel vividly the disgrace of being an unwounded prisoner of war."

"Let us ever go forward rationally. This word 'rationally' implies preparation, study and power, but not hesitation; our shout: 'Forward with God, for King and country' must overpower the French cry of 'En avant.'"

¹ Prince Frederick Charles, known as the Red Prince, is the father of our own Duchess of Connaught. [*Trs.*]

"The common soldier must be rendered conscious of his courage and strength; I demand that of every officer; thus the soldier gains confidence in his leaders."

History will regard the stimulation of the Prussian Army, which caused it to recover the consciousness of its strength at a moment when it was in danger of losing it, as the most important achievement of the Prince in his eventful life. He was the champion of a great movement, the movement of a nation that was becoming roused and united. Faithfully he did his duty.

The storm of the fortress of Düppel in 1864, and the battle of Königgrätz in 1866 had secured for the Prince a position of such eminence both in the country



PRINCE FREDERICK CHARLES OF PRUSSIA

and in the army, that his appointment as Commander-in-Chief of the Second Army seemed necessary and inevitable. No Commander has ever had greater confidence reposed in him; never did an army feel more entitled to regard its Commander as a sure presage of victory.

On the evening of the 14th of August, the extreme right wing of the army of the Prince, Wrangel's Division, was able to take part in the battle of Colombey. To its left, near the IXth Corps, the IIIrd stood ready for fight. The Xth had reached the Moselle at Pont-à-Mousson, the Guards at Dieulouard, and behind them were the IVth Corps, the Saxons and the IIInd Corps. The army was executing a great wheeling movement towards the right, and was thus exposed to a double danger: firstly,

that the corps placed on the outer flank might in consequence of their longer marches arrive too late; and secondly, that the corps forming the pivot might encounter the foe by themselves; this same danger had a few days afterwards to be obviated by those in command, amidst increased difficulties at Gravelotte.

In the night between the 14th and 15th of August the Great Head-Quarters of the King had no full information about the position and intentions of the enemy. It was quite conceivable that he might be concentrating his army under the walls of Metz, to lead it on the 15th to the attack of our feeble First Army, and this seemed all the more likely, as both policy and the honour of French arms urgently demanded a victory. Accordingly the King gave orders that the First Army should maintain, on the 15th, the ground conquered in the battle. From the Army of Prince Frederick Charles the IXth Corps should be brought up near the battle-field. Arrangements for the employment of the IIIrd Corps being meanwhile kept in abeyance. Both corps received orders from the Prince, simply to get closed up and cook their food with all possible despatch. The whole disposable cavalry was to advance towards the communications between Metz and Verdun, and the Xth Corps to follow the cavalry in the direction of Gorze and Thiaucourt.

While on the morning of the 15th of August the soldiers were still busy burying the dead, the King himself appeared in the midst of them. He wished personally to examine the position, to see whether arrangements and movements for attack were to be observed among the enemy. Actuated by his duty as Commander-in-Chief, he took no heed of the danger that threatened him; and only when the bullets fell near him did he calmly ride back. He had gained the impression that there were no longer any hostile troops east of Metz.

General von Alvensleben was convinced on the evening of the 14th of August, that the French, although their retreat had been interrupted by the battle of Colombey, yet would endeavour to escape westward beyond the Maas (Meuse); and the reports which came in during the night strengthened this conviction. Early in the morning of the 15th, the 3rd Uhlans and the 6th Cuirassiers had advanced with some artillery as far as Montigny, and had found this suburb of Metz unoccupied. Everything proved that the enemy had evacuated the country east of the Moselle. On the left bank, however, there was seen below St. Quentin, one of the larger forts of Metz, a camp apparently in deepest morning calm, but a few shells poured in caused a wild commotion. This was a morning greeting offered to the Emperor Napoleon, who was there in the midst of his Guards; a morning greeting on the Day of Napoleon,¹ usually celebrated with so much pomp; he sought a new Head-Quarters at Gravelotte.

General von Alvensleben knew that the order arresting the march of the IIIrd Corps was due to the idea that the situation in front of the First Army was not yet known; he reflected that this stand-still policy would place at least two days' march between the First Army and the retreating enemy. Accordingly, when his chief of the staff, Colonel von Voigts-Rhetz, submitted to him a *précis* of all the reports he could not do otherwise than exclaim, with gleaming eyes: "We march!" He considered it to be his duty to move with the IIIrd Corps on the 15th of August, so as to be able to cross the Moselle on that very day and to get in touch with the retreating enemy.

¹ The 15th August was Napoleon I's birthday. [*Trs.*]

As it was necessary to describe a curve round Metz he could only accomplish his object by forced marching, even taking into consideration that the narrow and winding streets of Metz must considerably retard the retreat of the French. He reported his decision with the needful arguments both to the Great Head-Quarters at Herny and to Prince Frederick Charles, and assuming consent under the changed situation, the corps was put in motion in two columns. However, the advance thus begun was not approved of; he was ordered to halt, wherever he happened to be. But he had already marched 15 kilometers (rather more than 9 miles) and was within 8 kilometers (5 miles) of the Moselle. Still holding to the leading idea that the Moselle had to be crossed



NIGHT-MARCH OF FRENCH TROOPS THROUGH METZ.

that very day, he now, although his corps was bound to halt, sent the light field-bridging-train to the Moselle, with orders to make a bridge in the neighbourhood of Champey. To bridge the river, swollen with heavy rains, with such inadequate military gear as he had, was no easy problem, but for all that it was solved.

Meanwhile, however, the Great Head-quarters became convinced of the retreat of the enemy, accordingly the IIIrd, IXth and XIIth Corps hitherto kept back, were restored to Prince Frederick Charles. The IIIrd Corps again started on its march at 5 o'clock in the evening, many not having yet finished their cooking. The bridge at Novéant had not been destroyed, and the 5th Division (General von Stülpnagel) passed over it and bivouacked between Novéant and Gorze. The 6th Division (General von Buddenbrock) accomplished its passage by the bridge thrown at Champey, and, after a very troublesome march, it bivouacked near Pagni and

Arnaville. Not till midnight did the men lie down in the streets, wherever they happened to be.

The 5th Cavalry Division (General von Rheinbaben: 4th Cuirassiers, 13th Uhlans, 19th Dragoons, 7th Cuirassiers, 16th Uhlans, 13th Dragoons; 10th, 11th and 7th Hussars, two horse batteries) had ever since the 14th been posted on both sides of the enemy's line of retreat, Metz—Mars-la-Tour—Verdun. This division, together with the brigade of Dragoon Guards which had advanced as far as Thiaucourt, was placed under the orders of General von Voigts-Rhetz commanding the Xth Army Corps, and was instructed to send in detailed and frequent reports about the roads leading from Metz to the Maas and about the fortress itself. Great stress was laid on the paramount

importance of their ascertaining whether the bulk of the hostile army had already left Metz, or whether it was still in the act of departing. It is significant that the third possible case, that the enemy might simply be remaining stationary before Metz, was not even taken into consideration. The orders stated expressly, that the cavalry and horse artillery should move forward as quickly as possible to the Metz-Verdun road, and along it to Metz itself, till a clear knowledge of the situation was obtained. To afford support to the movements of the cavalry General von Voigts-Rhetz pushed forward the 19th Infantry Division (General von Schwarzkoppen: the 78th, 91st, 36th, 57th Regiments, and the 9th Dragoons, with 1 field divn. of the 10th, and 2 pioneer companies of the 10th) as far as Thiaucourt, whilst the 20th (General von Kraatz-Kochlau) remained stationary at Pont-à-Mousson.

On the previous day Colonel von Lyncker had been sent forward into the valley of the Moselle, in the direction of the fortress, with two battalions of the 78th Regiment, two squadrons of the 9th Dragoons



REZONVILLE.

and a light battery, and on the evening of the 15th the troops of the 5th Division gained touch with them at Novéant.

On the afternoon of the 15th General von Rheinbaben lighted, near Puxieux and Mars-la-Tour, upon the French cavalry divisions of Forton, Valabrègue, and du Barail, but owing to their superior numbers he declined to attack them. He accordingly did not gain adequate information about the enemy's dispositions. No reports with clear information about the doings of the hostile army having been received, it seemed reasonable to assume that the enemy would continue the retreat through Metz to the Maas, which had been begun on the 14th at noon, and was only interrupted by the battle of Colombey. If this retreat were carried on during the 15th and the night of the 15th, then it was very likely that in the course of the 16th the IIIrd Corps would only light on the rear-guard of the enemy as he was hastening to the Maas. Accordingly, in the Army orders for the 16th August, the main advance of the Second Army was directed towards the Maas. Trusting to the capacity for marching

of the German troops, the hope was entertained that the enemy would be overtaken at that river. The IIIrd Corps was to gain the Metz-Verdun road at Mars-la-Tour, and the Xth Corps to advance towards the same road, moving on St. Hilaire-Maizeray. The Saxons, the Guards and the IVth Corps were to advance via Dieulouard, Pont-à-Mousson and Marbach, on to the left bank of the Moselle, to Regniéville-en-Haye, Rambucourt and les Saizerais; the IXth and IInd Corps to approach the right bank of the Moselle behind this line.

The IIIrd Corps was the first ready for the battle of the 16th, next came the Xth, and parts of the IXth and VIIIth Corps were able to join in late in the afternoon.

The battle of Vionville—Mars-la-Tour had not been planned; the mere position of the Head-Quarters of the two armies at Herny and Pont-à-Mousson proved that the Commander-in-Chief had not expected a battle on the 16th of August. The battle originated through the independent resolve of General von Alvensleben to lead his whole corps across the Moselle on the 15th, a resolve which he carried through



VIONVILLE.

FLAVIGNY.

SEEN FROM THE SOUTH.
(Contemporary sketch by W. Emelé.)

with the tenacity peculiar to him. Although the last troops of the IIIrd Corps had not come to rest before 2 o'clock in the morning, and but few had been able to cook their food, yet General von Alvensleben marched on the 16th at 5 a.m. and ordered the 6th Cavalry Division to march still earlier. No more definite news about the enemy having been received during the evening, the General—doubtless on account of the misleading reports as to the departure of the enemy—entertained the hope that the French army would be overtaken west of Metz, and therefore his orders for the 16th were calculated for an encounter with the foe. Should he still be close to Metz, then the corps could bar his way along the Metz-Verdun road; should he be marching on Verdun, then he would fall upon his flank; and if, contrary to all expectation, he had advanced a considerable distance in that direction, one might still hope to overtake portions of his army, to entangle them in a combat and detain them till the other corps of the Second Army should have come up.

By order of the Commander-in-Chief, General von Alvensleben's corps had been directed to take the Gorze road, but to enable his men to march in two columns the General, upon his own responsibility, used in addition the difficult mountain-road from

Onville to Les Baraques, and thus secured increased readiness for battle as well as the power of advancing with greater rapidity.

The retreat of the French Army of the Rhine, which was interrupted on the 14th, had been resumed with extraordinary dilatoriness. Very imperfect arrangements had been made for traversing Metz, toilsomely the columns of march wound through the narrow streets of the town and past the endless baggage-trains. The different corps had not had definite roads assigned to them, so that much delay was caused by crossings of bodies of troops, and blocks interrupted the movement. On the evening of the 15th only the Guards and the VIth Corps had reached their appointed positions at Gravelotte and Rezonville; the IIInd Corps stood at Rezonville; the IIIrd Corps only arrived during the night of the 15—16th in the neighbourhood of St. Marcel. The IVth Corps had to halt owing to the roads being blocked, and was not able to leave Doncourt until the 16th. In spite of all these drawbacks the position of the French was by no means critical. Our First Army could not advance in a straight line from the east, the fortress of Metz being in the way. Three corps stood ready to hold the line of the Verdun road against an attack from the south.

THE BATTLE.

The battlefield of the 16th of August lies west of Metz, and of those heights which surmount the valley of the Moselle on the left bank of the river; the woods of St. Arnould, Rezonville and Villers-aux-Bois constitute the sharply marked eastern boundary, beyond which the greater part of the French Army of the Rhine was encamped. The Metz-Verdun road running almost due east and west, divides the battle-field into two halves; along it, and at almost equal intervals of about 3 kilometers (nearly 2 miles), are situated Rezonville, Vionville and Mars-la-Tour. By ascending the valley of Onville via Les Baraques, and reaching the plateau near the statue of St. Mary, one obtains a distant view in every direction. The undulating country both offers cover to the troops and at the same time admits of free movement in every direction. Immediately to the east of Vionville, hiding the place from the enemy, there rises, past Flavigny as far as the wood of Vionville, a gentle elevation, whose northern edge dominates the slope. North of the highway, bordering it between Vionville and Mars-la-Tour, there extends a series of disconnected woodlands, the westernmost of which, the Tronville copses, became of great importance in the battle. Further to the east these copses stretch parallel to the road, their southern edge being encircled by an old Roman road; they formed an effective screen, behind which the enemy could move unobserved. Even in the early morning the heat was unendurable, and it remained so all day.

On the 16th of August the French had still not finished their retreat from Metz, and on the afternoon of that day three divisions still stood in the valley of the Moselle. The Emperor Napoleon had started early on the more protected road via Etain. In consequence of the delay of the IIIrd and IVth French Corps, caused by the battle of Colombey, Marshal Bazaine had determined to postpone the westward march of the army till the afternoon; and an order of his to this effect was found on the field of battle. The French wanted to quit Metz on the 16th of August, but were prevented by the battle.

The real battle was preceded by a light prelude. General von Voigts-Rhetz had ordered the 5th Cavalry Division to move forward towards the camp observed on the 15th of August near Rezonville. To afford support to this enterprise, Colonel Lehmann was sent forward with the 91st and the 1st battalion of the 78th Regiment in the direction of Chamblay, and was instructed to establish communication with Colonel von Lyncker, who had preceded him into the valley of the Moselle. There was thus formed a screen, behind which the Xth Corps might carry out the march that had been originally planned and the returning cavalry find retreat and shelter. Thus the Xth Corps had a footing on the battle-field from the commencement. Moreover, Colonel Count von Caprivi, the Chief of the Staff of this corps, had arrived early in the morning with the two horse-batteries, which had been brought to the cavalry by the 2nd squadron



COLONEL V. CAPRIVI.

of the 2nd Regiment of Dragoon-Guards. The presence of the Chief of the Staff on the battlefield during the long hours of waiting for the arrival of the corps was a presage for the day of the 16th of August: a kind of security that the Xth Corps would in due time arrive on the right spot.

The four horse-batteries of the 5th Division of Cavalry (General von Rheinbaben), led by Major Körber, galloped forward in the direction of Vionville and surprised by their shells the French cavalry harmlessly encamped there. At long tables, with white table-cloths, the officers were taking their breakfast, the men were boiling their morning soup, the cavalry were taking their horses unsaddled to drink; it looked like a camp in peace time; not a single measure of precaution had been taken.

Just as when a stick is poked into an ant-heap, so the picture was changed by the first of our shells that were dropped into the camp; the dragoons of Murat's Brigade leapt on their horses and galloped off in wild confusion, others did not even attempt to find their horses, but fled on foot. In this way the French camp was called to arms. Almost simultaneously with the artillery of the Xth Corps the horse-battery of the 6th Cavalry Division appeared; it was advancing from Novéant towards the Metz-Verdun road, and now opened fire against the enemy from the south.

At the first discharges of artillery, strong divisions of infantry hastened up towards Vionville and prevented a further advance of the cavalry. Our guns had prematurely called the enemy to arms and caused him to strongly occupy Vionville and Flavigny, as well as to oppose the advance of the 5th Division. Touch with the enemy was thus recovered. Looking out from the top of the ridge near the statue of St. Mary,

General von Alvensleben beheld the tents of a French camp, but he was unable to form an opinion about the strength of the enemy.

The fight of the IIIrd Army Corps was developed as follows. Stülpnagel's Division first established its right wing in the woodlands of St. Arnould and Vionville, and then, prolonging its front to the left, took possession with bullet and bayonet of the whole plateau as far as Flavigny. Soon the Corps Artillery came to their support on the left, and somewhat later Buddenbrock's Division took Vionville and Flavigny and conquered the neighbouring ground, the Tronville copses. The IIIrd Corps placed itself in front of the foe, right across his line of retreat. The artillery formed right to the end, the unswerving mainstay of this battle array. Any one who studies the battle of the 16th of August is driven to regard this arm with admiration; shoulder to shoulder with the infantry it emulated it in joyous self-sacrifice, and only thus were the fearfully thinned ranks of the infantry able to maintain the field conquered with so much blood. This contest lasted twelve long hours; it began by attacks on the part of the Germans, but became subsequently a struggle to maintain the conquered ground against the attacks which the enemy incessantly renewed with greatly superior forces and ever fresh combatants: the ranks were thinned from minute to minute, commanding officers fell, some battalions lost all their officers and were commanded by non-commissioned officers.

The corps of Brandenburgers alone lost on the 16th of August 310 officers and 6700 men. The infantry and artillery stood in a line nearly one mile (5 English miles) in length, without the possibility of any support except from the cavalry, which in a manner formed the second line of the infantry. And this IIIrd Corps fought with its front towards Metz and its back towards Paris; yet at no time during the whole day did there arise from the ranks of that corps a request for reinforcement, or a sigh of "We are spent." General von Alvensleben and his corps were perfectly aware that there was no help to be counted upon, and they were fully conscious that they were being sacrificed for the army; "the greater the number the IIIrd Corps has to-day to oppose, the greater will be the success on the morrow." General von Alvensleben looked into the future, and his corps was the willing and powerful tool which helped him out of his present difficulty.

The same Army Corps that the Brandenburgers fought at Spicheren now opposed them at Vionville. General Frössard occupied Vionville and Flavigny with Bataille's Division; with Vergé's Division he faced towards the heights of Gorze, while Lapasset's Brigade was thrown forward through the wood of St. Arnould. To the right rear Marshal Canrobert also moved two divisions of the VIth Corps into the neighbourhood of Vionville, leaving the 3rd in reserve at Rezonville.

Since half-past seven General von Stülpnagel had been moving behind the 6th Cavalry Division, by the road in the valley from Novéant to Gorze; he had the 9th Brigade (the Life Guards, the 48th, and the 3rd Jägers) as advanced-guard.

General von Buddenbrock, together with the Corps Artillery (Colonel von Dresky), had started from Arnaville as early as 5 o'clock, and was to march upon Mars-la-Tour by Onville and Buxières.

When the head of the 5th Division reached Gorze towards 9 o'clock, the report came in that hostile forces were advancing from Rezonville. The march is continued; the dragoons as they emerge from the wood on to the plateau, are received with so

hot a musketry fire, that advance becomes impossible. The first two battalions of the 48th Regiment ascend the slope, with the view of occupying, according to orders, the front edge of the wood of Vionville; to their left a battery unlimbers. General von Döring now brings the whole infantry of the advanced-guard to the height. General von Stülpnagel was at once convinced that the combat now engaged in would call into requisition all the forces at hand; he summons his whole artillery to the summit, and 24 guns combine their fire against Vergé's Division now coming to the attack. The first collision takes place at the wood of Vionville. The 48th Regiment and the Jägers contest every foot of ground in a bloody struggle. That portion of the Life Guards also, which had at first been held back, encounter the enemy to the right of the 48th, in the wood of St. Arnould; here too he is driven back step by step. On the left wing of the division Colonel von L'Estocq endeavours to outflank the enemy, but the attack, though undertaken with much energy, fails before the superior forces of the enemy. The 10th Brigade, General von Schwerin, comes up; immediately the foremost battalion of the 52nd Regiment hurls itself upon the French, suffers heavily, but pushes them back. The colour is passed from hand to hand, bearer after bearer is shot down; all the officers fall; General von Döring himself, the brave, unwearied, highly gifted officer dies the death of a hero. Whoever saw this General in the battle was convinced that he would either be Field-Marshal or die. The enemy prepares for a new attack,—he has the habit, so fatal to him, of executing a number of small attacks with ever fresh troops, instead of making one great well-prepared and powerful advance—but now the 52nd Regiment under Colonel von Wulffen is formed up, and with iron and lead it hurls the enemy back upon Flavigny. Here too heavy losses are suffered, the 52nd Regiment alone lost 18 officers and 345 men killed and 32 officers and 1202 men wounded. The 52nd Regiment were now joined by that portion of the 10th Brigade which had been still on the march—2 battalions of the 12th Regiment. It was now a question of maintaining the ridge that had been conquered.

On the right wing the 48th Regiment and the Jägers had gained possession of the northern edge of the wood of Vionville, whilst the two battalions of the regiment of Life Guards were still struggling for the possession of the wood of St. Arnould.

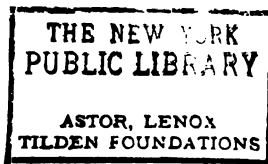
From the Xth Corps Colonel von Lyncker had been pushed forward towards Novéant with two battalions of the 78th Regiment; hearing the thunder of artillery he hastened to the field and reported himself to the General Commanding. He is ordered primarily to form an escort to the artillery. The batteries, now consisting of 30 guns, had followed the bloody track of the infantry; they are drawn up along the road to Flavigny, their right wing resting upon the edge of the wood of Vionville.

Soon after 6 o'clock General von Buddenbrock had received reports that hostile troops could be seen at Vionville and Flavigny. Amidst burning heat the 6th Division, with the Corps Artillery, climbs up the difficult road from Onville to Buxières, and continues the march towards the Metz-Verdun road. Arrived on the plateau, the General perceives that Vionville-Flavigny are strongly occupied and that it is necessary to expel the enemy. In sight of the enemy and covered by the artillery, the 6th Division wheels to the right, with the precision of the parade-ground, and General von Bülow, the Commander of the Artillery of the IIIrd Corps, now escorted by the 2nd Dragoons, leads the batteries of the 6th Division against the enemy and



THE 52ND REGIMENT AT VIONVILLE.

[face p. 140.



orders the Corps Artillery to follow quickly. Soon the batteries of the 5th and 6th Divisions of Cavalry together with those of the IIIrd Corps form a mighty front of artillery, which stretches from the heights of Tronville as far as the wood of Vionville. On the 16th of August the artillery celebrated its birthday on the battle-field.

The 6th Division had finished its wheeling; the 11th Brigade (General von Rothmahr, the 20th and 35th Regiments) advances on both sides of the road from Tronville to Vionville; on its left the 12th (Colonel von Bismarck, the 24th and 64th Regiments) advances along the great highway of Verdun-Metz. The 35th Regiment, the first line of the 11th Brigade, attacks Vionville with the 1st battalion; with the 2nd the churchyard to the south of it, and Flavigny with the 3rd. At the same time

the 64th Regiment was to threaten Vionville from the west and the north. Two battalions of the 20th Regiment are kept in reserve. The village, attacked from all sides, is taken at half-past eleven by rush. The 24th Regiment following in *échelon* on the left of the first line, had, during the contest for the possession of the village reached the trough of the valley which extends northwards from Vionville as far as the Roman road. It immediately engages in a vigorous musketry contest against hostile masses of infantry and artillery, which stretch in long lines as far as the road to Metz; it is the corps of Canrobert. From the outset it is seen that the left wing of our 6th Division is in danger; it is situated with exposed flank in front of crushingly superior forces, which are being hourly increased by the gradual approach of those



GENERAL V. BUDDENBROCK.

French corps which have not already arrived. Accordingly, General von Buddenbrock moves his artillery more towards this flank, on to an elevation immediately to the west of Vionville, where it, together with Major von Körber's batteries, effectively engages the French along the Roman road. At the same time the 2nd battalion of the 20th Regiment is sent in support of the 24th. Even now, at the very commencement of the battle, nearly the whole of the infantry and the artillery of the IIIrd Corps were fighting against superior numbers, without any prospect of speedy support. Part of the 5th Cavalry Division stood in rear of the 6th Division, and the 6th Cavalry Division was in rear of the left wing of General von Stülpnagel.

General von Buddenbrock found that the possession of Vionville could be secured only if he got hold of the rising grounds east of the village. Companies of the 20th and 35th Regiments took them in a bloody contest, whilst the 64th Regiment issued forth from Vionville on both sides of the highway. A devastating fire hurls

the storming-party to the ground, the officers fall, all command ceases, but it is compensated for by the irresistible courage of the Brandenburgers. At last the enemy yields, he quits the hotly disputed position round a group of trees by a well, and leaves a piece of artillery in the hands of the storming-party. Flavigny too is now taken; the left wing of the 5th Division enters the place from the right simultaneously with the Brandenburg Fusiliers, and now Flavigny becomes the centre of the line of battle of the IIIrd Corps. Dragoon Guards and Brunswick Hussars who had been pushed forward to cover the batteries, pursue the enemy in a bold cavalry-charge. During these contests the 5th Division, the right wing of the corps, had also made progress. The regiment of Life Guards had gained the northern edge of the wood



ZIETENHUSSARS AT VIONVILLE.

of St. Arnould, the 48th and the Jägers had maintained themselves in the possession of the wood of Vionville; 30 guns placed in line with them keep up a contest with those of Vergé's Division and the artillery reserve; to the left of them battalions of the 12th and 52nd Regiments endeavour to advance towards the highway.

Two French corps struggle with one Brandenburg corps; our Xth Corps, which had been directed towards the Maas, was not able to appear on the battle-field before the afternoon, but whoever of the Xth Corps heard the thunder of the battle hastened up; about 12 o'clock Colonel Lehmann, who had followed the 5th Cavalry Division to Chamblay, reported himself with his four battalions. General von Alvensleben pushed forward a battalion of the Oldenburghers through the Tronville copses, behind

the threatened outer flank of the 24th Regiment. With the three remaining battalions he formed a reserve, intended to remain at Tronville.

He had now gained his great strategic aim, which was to draw upon himself and to hold fast as many as possible of the hostile forces; the IInd Corps of the French was defeated and had retreated in disorder; its place was taken by the VIth Corps and a division of the Guards; the IIIrd was already advancing towards our left flank: the whole Army of the Rhine was on the spot. In spite of that, the German Commander stood to his resolve with great confidence: "Bazaine may beat me, but he



SURPRISE OF BAZAINE.

is a long way from being rid of me." If defeated he intended to keep the highway he had taken possession of, and to retreat upon the Maas, where he could count upon being received by the Xth Corps.

During the whole of the 16th of August Marshal Bazaine was labouring under two misconceptions; firstly, he did not believe that the forces he could see in front of him holding out with such tenacity comprised all the available forces of the enemy, and he was confirmed in this opinion by the reckless offensive taken by the IIIrd Corps: their valour had doubled their number; and secondly, he believed that it was the object of his enemy to drive him away from Metz, and that his left wing was the

threatened point. Fugitive peasants reported to him a continual approach of bodies of Prussians from the valley of the Moselle to Gorze, and his anxiety about his left flank increased. Nor had these peasants greatly exaggerated, as is wont to happen; for as a matter of fact the IXth and VIIIth Corps did come up from the valley of the Moselle. To enter fully into the state of mind of the French Commander-in-Chief, it must not be overlooked that the attack of our IIIrd Corps, with its front towards Metz, delivered as it was from a position right astride of the French line of retreat, upset all the assumptions and inferences usually accepted in war. Two days previously the French Army of the Rhine had been attacked under the very guns of Metz and hurled back into the fortress. The order of retreat was given under



GENERAL V. BREDOW.

the justified assumption that the enemy was in front and not at their rear. The surprising appearance of such considerable forces west of the defeated army caused anxiety to the Commander-in-Chief as well as to the last drummer-boy; it was a palpable proof of the superiority of the Germans intellectually and physically. From this point of view the resolve of General von Alvensleben appears in its true light. The bravest soldier loses heart, if he finds that his General is unable to protect his rear.

Generals Frossard and Canrobert took up a defensive position about a mile (English) from Rezonville, to meet the attack of the IIIrd Corps, and had the artillery reserves called up for that purpose. To the right and to the left of the artillery were placed the cavalry divisions of Forton and Valabr  gue. The IIIrd and IVth

Corps still struggling up from Metz received orders to hasten their march and place themselves on the right wing of the line of battle.

To re-establish their fighting-line in front of the IInd Corps, the French Regiment of Cuirassiers of the Guard was ordered to charge the pursuers. They fall upon the left wing of the 5th Division, parts of the 52nd and 12th Regiments. Calmly, without firing a shot our skirmishers await the cavalry; at a distance of 250 paces volleys of musketry are discharged upon the squadrons, and the field is covered with dead and wounded, 22 officers and 208 cuirassiers having fallen; the rest escape destruction by speedy flight, and are pursued by Redern's Brigade which has just come up. The Brunswick Hussars and the 2nd Dragoon Guards attack the battered cuirassiers, and the 11th Hussars charge the infantry as it retreats in disorder; one of their squadrons rides into a battery of the French guards just coming up and takes it before it can

fire a shot. The fleeing teams carry Marshal Bazaine away with them and he is in danger of being made prisoner; his escort draw their swords and set him free.

When General von Alvensleben beheld the flight of the IInd Corps, he ordered the 6th Cavalry Division (Duke William of Mecklenburg) to charge in pursuit. This division was at some distance in rear and it took some time to set it in motion, and thus it happened that it no longer encountered hostile infantry fleeing in disorder, but fresh troops, brought against it in regular formation, whose fire shattered its attack. Although ineffectual, yet this charge afforded the artillery the desired opportunity of taking up a more advanced position, and to the infantry of closing up their loosened ranks. Once more they succeed in gaining about two hundred paces of ground, but on the left wing things are getting critical. The attacks, prepared for by a destructive fire, which were made by the enemy in the much disputed trough of the valley between Vionville and the Roman road, were indeed still repelled by the 24th Regiment and the 2nd battalion of the 20th Regiment, but the majority of the officers



Road to Rezonville.

Vionville (from N. E.)

SCENE OF THE CHARGE OF BREDOW'S BRIGADE.

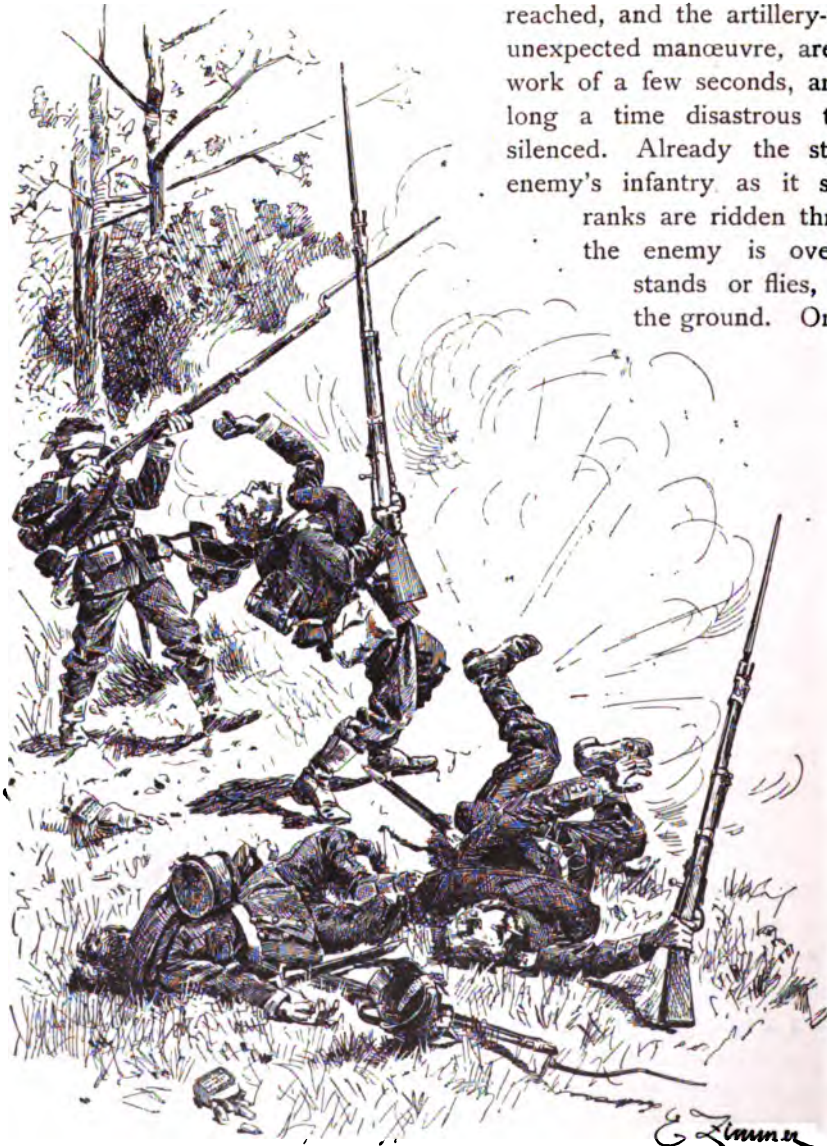
(Contemporary sketch by W. Emelé.)

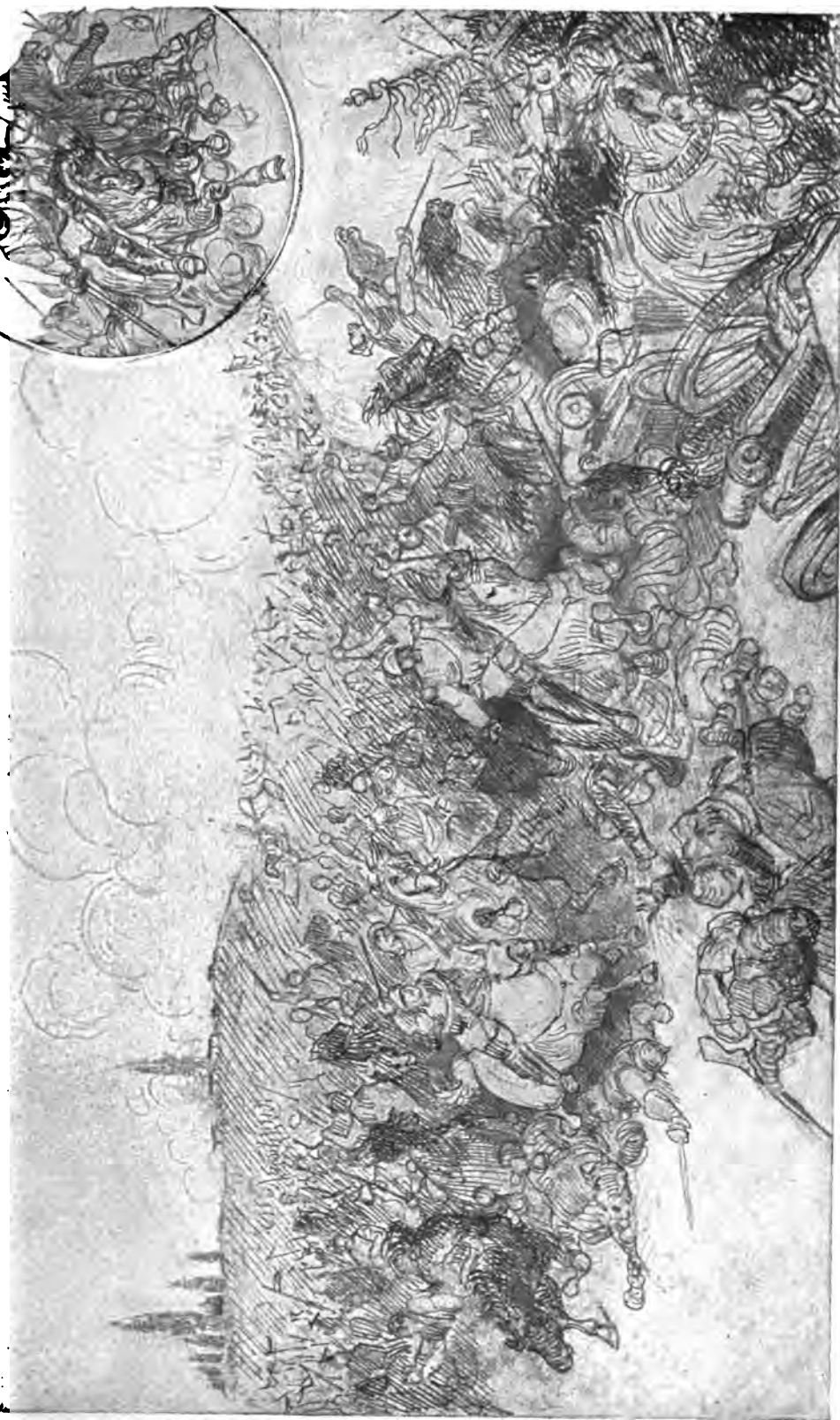
had fallen, and considerable fresh masses of troops were making their appearance from the direction of St. Marcel, and their bullets swept the valley. To ward off this new danger General von Alvensleben was forced to call up his last reserve, which he had hitherto kept intact. He ordered Colonel Lehmann with his two and a half battalions (91st and 78th Regiments) to reach the Tronville copses and attach himself to the 6th Division. Moreover, Colonel von Caprivi, Chief of the Staff of the Xth corps, had promised the arrival of his corps at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and with desperate fighting they succeeded in still keeping the copses. It was 2 o'clock; the battalions had melted away as snow does before the sun, and the ammunition was nearly exhausted; for long intervals there was hardly an officer to be seen, only brave Brandenburgers, resolved even without commanders to do their duty and to die rather than yield a step. In that moment Marshal Canrobert burst forth towards Vionville. General von Alvensleben resolved therefore to bring up all the disposable cavalry. Colonel von Voigts-Rhetz, the Chief of the Staff, delivers the order for attack to General von Bredow, who stands with the 7th Regiment of Cuirassiers and

the 16th Regiment of Uhlans between Vionville and Tronville; he gives the needful explanations about the situation and about the importance attached to this charge, and adds that the brigade should leave the batteries on their right, and advance along the wood against the right wing of the enemy. General von Bredow no doubt thought that the Tronville cosses were in the hands of the enemy; at least he thought it necessary to send towards the cosses a squadron of each regiment, and took his chance. Once convinced of the necessity this General knew no hesitation, or impediment. Having at his right the three squadrons of the 16th Uhlans, under Major von der Dollen, men of the Alte Mark, and to his left those of the 7th Cuirassiers, under Major v. Schmettow, men of Halberstadt, he gallops away across the highway up the steep path of glory. The squadrons wheel to the right, advance, and in full gallop

they dash at the foe. Now their batteries are reached, and the artillery-men, amazed by this unexpected manœuvre, are cut down; it is the work of a few seconds, and these guns for so long a time disastrous to our infantry are silenced. Already the storm roars into the enemy's infantry as it stands inactive; the ranks are ridden through and scattered; the enemy is overtaken whether he stands or flies, or flings himself on the ground. On they go to encounter

a second line of infantry, but now the audacious riders get into a circle of fire, for the infantry that had been ridden through recovers again and opens fire. The much thinned squadrons are scattered by this time, the horses, after tearing along a victorious course 3000 paces long, are quite spent. From the right and from the left Forton's and Valabrègue's cavalry divisions fall upon these exhausted and bat-

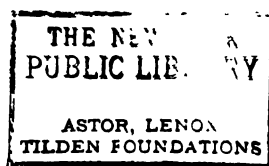




ASSAULT BY THE BRIGADE BREDOW.

Bleibtreu.

[face p. 146.



tered heroes. The cuirassiers are crowded upon the uhlans, and the whole whirl of men and horses, friend and foe, crushed together in dense coil, are pressing down to the causeway, often hardly able to lift an arm. At last German strength prevails and those of the cuirassiers and uhlans who are still in the saddle return in a wide sweep to Vionville. After the charge barely more than 100 men are left of these squadrons to gather round the standards; in the evening it is found that there are missing 18 officers and one-third of the men. When on the day following the King visited the battle-field, a white road led up to the foe; it consisted of a line of fallen cuirassiers. ¹

For a while the enemy was quite paralyzed; many of his batteries did not fire a shot for some time; from that quarter the French made no further attacks during the whole of the 16th of August. It may well be asked, how it was possible that six squadrons without the support of a second line, flinging themselves in a mad venture upon a whole army-corps could produce such an effect! But it was due to the same delusion which became so fatal to the French; they did not believe that it was only a few squadrons they had to deal with; they considered the cavalry charge as the first act of an intended general offensive movement to be executed by the guards and the Saxons, supposed to have just arrived on the field. One glance at the uniform of the regiments and at the distribution state of our army might have taught them better. Both poet and painter are incited to celebrate the battle of Vionville chiefly by the charge of Bredow's Brigade. Whoever speaks of this battle thinks of the Trumpeter of Vionville ² and of the 7th Cuirassiers, whose uniform is specially dear to Germans; it is the regiment of Prince Bismarck. Yet all through a long day, till the darkness of night put an end to the rough work, the infantry and artillery evinced a hardihood not a whit inferior to that displayed by the audacious horsemen for a few minutes. It is true the heavy losses are no proof of the men's courage, but they are evidence of what was demanded of them: the 3rd Westphalian Regiment alone lost in a single short attack 49 officers and 1756 men killed and wounded.

During the cavalry charge the French made ready with the IIIrd and IVth Corps to attack the Tronville copses and thus seriously to threaten our left wing. The French endeavoured to envelop our line of battle with two divisions of their IIIrd Corps in front, one of the IVth on their right and one of the VIth on their left. First of all the battalions of the 20th and 24th Regiments, still contesting the possession of the valley between Vionville and St. Marcel, led partly by non-commissioned officers, rush into the Tronville copses, which are held by the Oldenburghers. The companies, or rather the groups of skirmishers yield step by step. After one hour's fighting the French are able to seize the northern edge of the wood. Here too our batteries form the principal support for the exhausted infantry. The shots begin to reach our line of guns from the rear, but fortunately we succeed in receiving our infantry as it staggers back. The 24th Regiment lost 52 officers and 1000 men; twice the standard-bearer of the fusilier battalion was shot down. Quickly the village of Tronville is occupied and made ready for defence.

But the enemy was at no time in full possession of the Tronville copses; he is content to hold the northern edge and does not venture to make a further advance.

¹ Balacava over again; only the English charged artillery and cavalry, the German artillery and infantry. [Trs.]

² The title of a poem by Freiligrath. [Trs.]

The densely entangled pathless thicket formed a clearly marked position for our flank to rest on, and a wall of shelter against the enemy. The glorious time from 12 to 4 o'clock had intimidated the commander of the enemy and wholly misled him about the disproportion of the forces.

At about 4 o'clock in the afternoon the 20th Infantry Division (General von Kraatz-Koschlau), after a march of 45 kilometres (about 28 Eng. miles), arrived on the battle-field. A meeting of the two Generals in command ¹ had already taken place, and General von Voigts-Rhetz had accelerated the advance of his corps. The batteries are the first in position, and keep back the enemy; the battalions of the 20th Division follow, and force their way into the copses, which they clear after a short engagement. The timely appearance of these troops on the left flank of the IIIrd Corps, and the capture of the Tronville copses, restored the former position of the fight.

About the same time the right wing too was reinforced. A brigade of the VIIIth Corps, and the 11th Regiment which was marching at the head of the IXth Corps, had joined in the battle. Opposite the northern edge of the wood of St. Arnould the French Division of Grenadier Guards occupied the heights between the wood and Rezonville. As soon as, at about 5 o'clock, the appearance of the 16th Division made itself felt, Montaudon's Division was placed upon the same heights, and strong reserves stood ready at Rezonville.

General von Barnekow, reinforced by the 11th Regiment, led his nine battalions ² through Gorze and the wood of St. Arnould against the strong position of the enemy. The heights are taken by storm, but it is impossible to maintain them against the vastly superior reserves of the French. Indeed Marshal Bazaine thought it his duty during the whole of the 16th of August to reinforce his left wing under all circumstances, because he feared being cut off from Metz. Short and destructive is the battle of the 72nd and 40th Regiments; the brave 11th Regiment rushes to its destruction and loses in a few minutes its Commanding Officer, 41 officers and 1119 men. For the third time the enemy charges with superior reserves, but he cannot take the edge of the wood, our destructive rapid fire hurls him back. Once more, under the personal leadership of their Generals, the French charge with the 2nd Brigade of Voltigeurs of the Guard and the Zouaves of the Guard; but they too have to yield. Both sides have measured strength and admit that further progress is impossible. For nearly a whole hour the musketry fire along the whole front of Rezonville was silenced.

It was towards 4 o'clock when, suddenly, as if upon a given signal, and yet without preconception and without superior orders, the infantry breaks forth from all sides for assault against the enemy and the heights held by him. But it is obviously impossible to make any progress whatever up the exposed slope against the central point of the enemy's position, strong as it is, and held by an unusually great number of men. These attacks, though without visible success, increased the anxiety of the French Commander concerning his left flank; the masses of men, who stood at Rezonville with ordered arms, were thus held fast.

¹ Of the Xth and IIIrd Corps. The 20th Division belonged to the Xth Corps (General von Voigts-Rhetz). [*Trs.*]

² Gen. von Barnekow was the commander of the 16th Div. (VIIIth Corps, 1st Army), but only one of his own brigades had come up, so counting the 3 batt. of the 11th Regt. (IXth Corps, 2nd Army), he had only 9 battalions. [*Trs.*]

Meanwhile the 19th Infantry Division (General von Schwarzkoppen) and, before him, the Brigade of Dragoon Guards under the command of General Count Brandenburg, had arrived on the field. They arrived at Mars-la-Tour at the very moment when the 20th Division were advancing against the Tronville copses, and General von Schwarzkoppen immediately resolved to support the efforts of the 20th Division by making a flank attack in a north-easterly direction. From the direction of Bruville new masses of the IVth French Corps had kept moving into position on the southern heights, thus lengthening out the right wing of the hostile line of battle. The Commander of the 38th Brigade, General von Wedel, formed two lines, with a regiment on each wing, the 57th on the right, the 16th on the left. The dragoon-guards had to cover the left flank. Six batteries drive up at Mars-la-Tour, and hurl their shells. These Westphalians first bow their knees and hearts to receive the blessings of their chaplain, and the Catholics also to receive general absolution.

Towards half-past four Wedel's Brigade marches past Mars-la-Tour, which stands in



Road to Bruville.

Ferme la Greyère.

THE ULZON VALLEY NEAR MARS-LA-TOUR.

(Contemporary sketch by W. Emelé.)

flames. Shells describing great arches fall into this much desired spot; nearly all the mounted officers are at once shot down; the men fall in heaps and death strides unrestrained over the field. With calm, steady bearing the men march forward to the edge of the chasm limiting the dread heights. Suddenly in a long line rises the enemy's infantry, and pours deafening volleys upon them. Dead and wounded fall in heaps, but the courage of the Westphalians is not yet broken. These death-defying men get to within a few steps of the foe, but he, hurling himself upon them in overwhelming numbers, forces them down the heights they had conquered with so much blood. All coherence is destroyed, singly they return, some lie down in dull stupefaction. Last of all, on his horse, which has escaped as by a miracle, Colonel von Cranach, carrying the flag of a battalion, comes riding slowly out of the field of destruction.

Thus Wedel's Brigade perished tragically in its heroic contest against forces of more than double its number. The deaths of 72 officers and 2542 men eloquently testify to the glory of Westphalia. Now more hostile masses are seen to approach and there is not a single battalion at hand to oppose them. Once more the cavalry

is called to help. General Count Brandenburg leads out the 1st Dragoon Guards, Full of power and beauty, like a youthful hero, this brilliant regiment advances and quickly reaches its goal. The dragoons hurl themselves upon the hostile infantry, cut them down and hew a pathway for themselves through the dense columns. The enemy, stunned by this impetuosity, halt and give back. Out of 20 officers 15 fall. Von Auerswald, the Commander of the regiment, dying, with a "Hurrah for the King!" hands his regiment over to the Prince of Hohenzollern, the Senior Officer who is not yet *hors de combat*. This valorous cavalry charge gained a brilliant success, which was scarcely to be expected. The enemy inspired with respect even by the attack of Von Wedel which had failed, and simply struck blind by the charge of the dragoon-guards, stopped his advance and fell back upon the heights in his possession.

General Von Wedel had the glory and the consolation of feeling that his battle had not been fought in vain. If the attack on the enemy's right wing had not been made—and his superiority would have justified it—then our holding back would have forced him to advance. If then one division had been carried away by another, our few battalions would have been inadequate to stem his terrible onset. At Vionville every soldier present was bound to die or conquer.

Simultaneously with the 1st Dragoons Guards the 2nd made an equally glorious charge. To the left of Wedel's Brigade they had turned towards the north, accompanied by the 1st horse-artillery battery of the Guards, which opened fire against the extreme right wing of the enemy. In a wild onset the 2nd Regiment of the Chasseurs d'Afrique fly at the dragoons and the battery; bravely the dragoons accept battle against a threefold superior foe; Count Finckenstein, the Commander of the regiment, falls and with him the Captain of horse, and here too the enemy does not venture to pass over such heroism. The 13th Regiment of Dragoons puts the chasseurs to flight. Then the assembly was sounded for our cavalry, for larger masses of hostile horse appear on the field.

Shortly after the Xth Corps had begun to arrive, Prince Frederick Charles had appeared on the field. The Chief of his staff, Colonel von Stiehle, shouted to him: "Your Royal Highness's appearance is worth a whole army-corps." As a matter of fact the Prince, riding along the whole front, animated the thinned ranks. To his steadfast endurance, to his sturdy adherence to the idea that "win he must," and to the courage inspired by his presence is due the glorious result of the day.

The uncertainty as to where his appearance would be needed, at the Maas or at Mars-la-Tour, had compelled the Prince to remain at his Headquarters, so as to be able to dispose of the corps which were still on the right bank of the Moselle. At 2 o'clock he received information of the serious engagement of the IIIrd Corps, and immediately rode at full gallop the distance of 25 kilometers (= 15 miles) to the battle-field, having previously ordered the IXth Corps to advance. His short order was: "Steady on the right wing, attack on the left." Determined to conquer, he conquered. When he appeared on the field, the 20th Division was, owing to the retreat of Wedel's Brigade, just making ready to abandon the Tronville copses. Immediately the Prince gave orders to front, and renew the contest. We thus retained possession of the copses, and the left flank of the IIIrd Corps was again safe. There can hardly be any greater moments in the life of a general than this in the day's work of General von Alvensleben: "Here I have been standing for long hours, and shall not yield." That was his resolve when the 20th Division went back.

Now our left wing is threatened by a mighty mass of cavalry, which shews itself on the ridge of Ville-sur-Yron. It is Legrand's Cavalry Division and the Cavalry Brigade of the Gardes-Français. On the side of the Germans there stand ready at



DEATH OF COLONEL V. AUERSWALD.

Mars-la-Tour, Barby's Brigade (4th Cuirassiers, 13th Uhlans, 19th Dragoons) and several regiments in the act of joining them; altogether 16 squadrons. General von Barby places the Oldenburgers in front, and the 13th Uhlans and the 4th Cuirassiers cover the flanks. With a crash the ranks collide. A cloud of dust envelops the heaving

mass of 5000 horsemen in hand-to-hand fight, and the contest gradually turns in our favour. From all sides the trumpets sound the assembly, the field is conquered and swept of the enemy. The whole mass of French cavalry has turned to flight.

Gradually all arms of our troops had reached the limit of their strength, making any further action impossible; there were no soldiers at hand to deal the last blow on the enemy. Yet not only did our army maintain the positions it had conquered, but Prince Frederick Charles thought he could exact the uttermost from his Brandenburgers. About half-past seven in the evening he ordered a general advance. Very few commanders would engage on such a venture with such thinned ranks. Prince Frederick Charles did it, and on this evening he fully displayed his brilliant qualities. The last blow in that bloody deed of arms was dealt by us after twilight had set in, thus proving that we were the conquerors. Some years afterwards, at the Prince's dinner-table, the conversation turned on the battle of Vionville, and the Prince said with animation and with gleaming eyes: "No battle is lost, as long as you don't feel yourself defeated. And I was determined not to feel so. The will to conquer, conquers."

On both flanks (on the right, the drawn up here are compelled to retreat. Our artillery too, only able to move at a walk, drives with a heavy heart nearer to the foe, for they know each range and are acquainted with every corner of the ground. It is getting dark, the masses of the enemy retreating in long columns to Rezonville are hardly recognizable. Our cavalry is coming up, cautiously they question each other, because they can no longer see; they are the 16th Hussars, the Zieten Hussars, and the 9th Dragoons, who now literally spend the last breath of man and horse to ride into the dark for the last concluding attack. With "Hurrah!" they advance; the 6th Cuirassiers, the 3rd and 15th Uhlans also charge the enemy's infantry. The "Hurrah!" of these horsemen was the shout of victory of the Prussian Army.



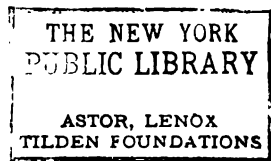
MEMORIAL TO THE 5TH DIVISION AT FLAVIGNY.

division of General von Barnekow and the 11th Regiment; on the left, the Xth Corps) the last fight had been fought, the last strength spent. In the centre, stimulated by the presence of the Prince, the 64th, 24th and 91st Regiments dragged themselves beyond Vionville, so as to at least shew themselves once more to the enemy; the 35th and 20th Regiments exerted themselves once more to gain in a final rush the heights of Rezonville. A few batteries of the enemy



CAVALRY COMBAT AT MARS-LA-TOUR (OLDENBURG DRAGOONS AGAINST FRENCH GARDE-LANCIERS.)

[face p. 152.]



This attack so late in the evening gives to history conclusive proof as to who gained the victory. Marshal Bazaine had endeavoured on the 16th of August to lead his army to Verdun, but failed in the attempt; after the 16th he no longer ventured on it. Moreover, in the evening of the day we held the ground taken from the French. No Prussian had fallen back on that day, but the French retreated nearly half a German mile (nearly $2\frac{1}{2}$ Engl. miles).

On our side were engaged five divisions of infantry and two divisions of cavalry; on the French side fifteen divisions of infantry and five of cavalry; each side suffered a loss of about 16,000 killed and wounded. An eloquent proof can be given of the obstinacy of the contest on both sides, viz., that neither party had any trophies to shew, no standards, no flags, no guns were taken, no number of prisoners worth naming. In the campaign of 1870/71 we had a critic before whom every one bows to the ground, it was King William I of Prussia, the victorious Commander-in-Chief of the German Army. His Majesty, our late Emperor, wrote after the capitulation of Metz to Prince Frederick Charles: "The 16th of August stands, with respect to the IIIrd Corps, so high in my opinion that on every opportunity I describe it as the date of one of the most heroic deeds of arms; for General von Alvensleben and his corps acted with a self-sacrifice so great that it could only have been possible because every individual soldier felt how much was at stake.

"I compare this heroic deed with that of the 29th of August, 1813, where my late father sent forward the 1st Russian division of the guards and the Russian division of Prince Eugene of Württemberg, with instructions that they must stand their ground, otherwise the 'Great Army' would not be able to reach the plain of Teplitz through the impracticable Erzgebirge (Ore-Mountains) of Bohemia, and would be destroyed by Vandamme.

"Similarly every soldier of every arm of the IIIrd Army Corps, and its Commander-in-Chief were aware that to succumb on that day, albeit that the enemy was so greatly superior in numbers, meant a junction of the two hostile armies. But this very day had as consequence the capitulation of a whole army and of a fortress of the first rank; for without the 16th the 18th would have been impossible, and without the 18th of August there would have been no 27th of October. ¹ We may both congratulate ourselves to have commanded a corps that was capable of such heroism."

Prince Frederick Charles camped on the positions wrenched from the enemy. His last order on August the 16th, 1870, ran: "The battle-field will be maintained."

¹ The surrender of Metz and of the whole of Bazaine's army. [Trs.]

CHAPTER VI

ST. PRIVAT-LA-MONTAGNE AND METZ

BY COLMAR, BARON VON DER GOLTZ-PASHA,
Major-General and Turkish Marshal.

THE EVE OF THE BATTLE OF GRAVELOTTE

It had become quite dark when, on the evening of the 16th of August, Prince Frederick Charles and his retinue quitted the battle-field of Vionville. A few sporadic shots were still being fired on the left from Rezonville, and on the right in the woods in the direction of Gravelotte. At intervals a regular continuous musketry fire flared up for a short while. But the camp-fires just lighted by the French were already gleaming, even close up to the fighting-line of our troops, and after 9 o'clock every thing was perfectly quiet. The fierce fight was finished.

The General would not quit the field earlier, because he still thought it possible that one last effort more might be made by the enemy, who, in his constantly repeated attacks, had on that day evinced an astonishing tenacity.

We were not elated. The greatly superior numbers of the enemy had been very evident. The utmost display of courage had enabled our thinly occupied and widely extended line of battle to hold its own till the sun set beyond the mountains. But what would the morrow bring? The French had still at their disposal forces that were fresh, and had not yet been engaged. In the evening they were distinctly seen beyond Vionville and Rezonville by the Roman road. It was far from unlikely that they might renew their attack at the first break of dawn, when our reinforcements could not yet have reached the heights of Flavigny, the decisive point of the position. But would our troops, exhausted with to-day's fight, hold out any more? This anxious question was in every heart. After all, Nature everywhere demands her rights. Exhaustion must necessarily follow the all but superhuman tension of the day.

And yet there prevailed but an imperfect idea of the havoc wrought in our ranks by this battle. The losses were commonly estimated at 8000 men—at the half of the actual number. The practised eye of the Prince certainly made a more accurate estimate. He well knew that the effect of such a blow as was dealt at Vionville must be felt equally on both sides. He did not believe in a renewal of the fight, but nevertheless he prepared ¹ for it by calling up all the disposable troops that could at all be reached. But on the more remote troops he did not count.

A scene, in itself insignificant, contributed greatly to animate the spirits of the men. Around a sutler's barrel on the road to Gorze were collected some troops of all arms to slake their burning thirst; the scene was dimly lit up by the light of a

¹ This is evident from the memoranda made by the Prince himself during the progress of the war.

lamp. The Prince stopped, and for a moment he stepped up to the men out of the surrounding darkness. Unobserved for some time, a soldier at last¹ recognized the highly revered, well-known features of the General. A silent signal was passed round—a moment of silence ensued, followed by a loud “Hurrah!” and a hundred throats struck up the “Prince Frederick Charles” song, composed in front of Düppel. It sounded as cheerily and powerfully as if it had been sung in the morning before and not in the evening after the battle. Numerous sleepers round about rose from the ground and hastened up to greet the Prince.

Yes, with such troops a last tussle might be ventured on. In a more cheerful mood he pursued his way to Gorze.

The little town was over-full with troops and with wounded. It was difficult to find a comparatively empty house; and even this a French maid pluckily endeavoured to defend. “Un grand médecin,” she said, was within, and he had sternly forbidden all admission, as he wished to sleep. But this “grand médecin” turned out to be a woman, and spite of her protest she was turned out of bed and sent to attend to the wounded. The Commander-in-Chief took possession of his last conquest on this day of victory.

Soon afterwards the orderly officers hastened through the night to carry orders to the Guards, the XIth, and the Saxon Army Corps,² summoning them to the battle-field. From the King’s Head-Quarters news arrived that all the disposable forces in the neighbourhood had been ordered to march up. “The greater the numbers that the IIIrd Army Corps have to contend with to-day, the greater will the success be on the morrow, when the Xth, IIIrd, IXth, VIIIth and VIIth and also the XIIth will be brought against the same forces of the enemy,” such was General v. Moltke’s dictum, and it was very consoling.

But by early dawn only the IXth Army Corps could appear on the plateau of Flavigny, larger reinforcements were not to be expected before the afternoon, and till then many an anxious hour would have to pass over their heads. A summer forenoon lasts a long time in war if, standing in front of a superior foe, you are anxiously waiting for reinforcements.

At a quarter-past three people began to stir in Gorze. At dawn the Prince and his staff returned to the field. The night had passed quietly. But just now the gravity of the position was evident. The long lines of battle between the wood of Vionville and Flavigny, against which every onset of the French was shivered, now stood as though abandoned. Here and there a sentry was seen marching to and fro in the batteries. Over on the French side calls could be heard; what would happen if they were to sound the assembly and renew their attacks, after careful preparation and with increased forces?

The mist soon lifted; the air was very clear and the whole battle-field could be distinctly seen as far the lines of smoke beyond Rezonville, which had formed over the French camps. With a good glass it could be perceived that there was busy movement over there. The indefinite commotion to and fro gradually assumed a clearly intelligible shape. Long lines of skirmishers were advancing right athwart the field upon our positions. How anxiously they were watched may be readily understood. From our outposts we saw a squadron of uhlans advance against them in

¹ As is well known, the Prince had at the outbreak of the war exchanged the supreme command of the IIIrd Corps for the command-in-chief of the Second Army.

² The XIIth Corps. [*Trs.*]



PRINCE FREDERICK CHARLES AFTER THE BATTLE OF VIONVILLE.

extended order. The movement was arrested. After a while the enemy slowly retired by the road he had come. But at Rezonville and before Gravelotte his unwieldy forces were seen

moving to and fro. Far away all the fields were covered with troops.

Meanwhile, at the first advance of the French, the remnant of the brave battalions of the IIIrd Army Corps hastened to fall in. The German line of battle too was gradually filling up, albeit but sparingly. Exultingly the troops greeted the Prince, whose presence visibly inspired them with confidence. Towards 6 o'clock in the morning the head

of the IXth Army Corps arrived at the heights of Flavigny. With its appearance confidence increased. If the battle should be renewed, then there were fresh forces at hand, at least for the first few hours.

Soon afterwards the news spread on the field, that the King and Von Moltke had arrived. All looks were turned towards the Gorze road, and between 6 and 7 o'clock the Great Head-Quarters came up from Pont-à-Mousson. Prince Frederick Charles made his report. The two retinues commingled, and there took place an animated exchange of opinions. Nobody doubted but that yesterday's battle had brought about a decisive turn in the march of events. Over and again eye-witnesses were called upon to narrate the occurrences. Especial commendation was awarded to the artillery, which in 1866 had not fully come up to what was expected of it, but here at Vionville it had been able to shew its worth. Without its steadfast endurance, the infantry, spite of all self-sacrifice, would have had to succumb to the superior forces of the enemy.

Reports came in and officers were despatched. Clouds of dust rose over the French masses and were watched attentively as on the previous day. At last columns on the march were observed, moving from Rezonville to Gravelotte and thence partly to Metz, and partly northwards via Malmaison to Vernéville. At 11 o'clock in the forenoon there were only wounded enemies found in Rezonville. But at Gravelotte

there were seen concentrated considerable masses of troops, covered by advanced swarms of skirmishers. The numbers of the enemy were increasing there, and at times a new attack was expected, but afterwards it was seen that we had evidently only a powerful rear-guard before us. The smoke from freshly lighted camp-fires hid the details from our eyes. From the left flank reports came in that French columns were marching on the highway from St. Marcel—according to the reports—in the direction of Jarny and Verdun. Bugle calls were heard in the direction of Metz and also from the west.

In the early hours of the afternoon French arms were seen on the heights of Leipzig and Moscou behind Gravelotte.

Gradually it was seen that there would be no attacks made on August 17th. A natural feeling took possession of us, of the Second Army, that we had passed through the dread day, and that now it would be the turn of others to act. Our thoughts dwelt more on the past and were directed less towards the future. The presence of the Great Head-Quarters led us to expect orders direct from it. Thus the hours sped.

King William meanwhile rode over the battle-field, enquired after many details and spoke to the wounded. Various troops came past him, among others the dreadfully thinned Zieten Hussars, two squadrons of which had each only one troop. The infantry was in a sad plight; the battalions, some commanded by a lieutenant only, had dwindled to quite small bodies. Gradually the losses were known more accurately. The huge number of 15,000 men was mentioned and terrified us all. As is now known, it was not exaggerated, but fell somewhat short of the reality.

Meanwhile reinforcements were gradually arriving. The Saxon Corps entered Mars-la-Tour at midday; the Guards reported their arrival at Puxieux. There were now forces on the spot to continue the fight.

But they had made long and wearying marches. The Saxons came from beyond Thiaucourt and Pont-à-Mousson, and the Guards even from Beaumont. They had marched in the heat of summer from 4 to 5 German miles (19 to 24 Engl. miles). One could not expect much from the forces that had fought the day before. The march to the hostile positions would have taken a considerable time and required no small exertion. All the Generals¹ present voted in favour of postponement of the fight till the morrow. Prince Frederick Charles also shared this view. It was decided to attack on the 18th of August, orders were issued accordingly and King William returned to Pont-à-Mousson. General von Steinmetz, who had ridden forward from Ars-sur-Moselle, through the woods on the way to Gravelotte, and had thence observed the French troops in their positions at Point-du-Jour, stopped the fight that had already begun on the right wing of the Germans, and took up his Head-Quarters in Ars. Prince Frederick Charles rode to the hamlet of Buxières. A few miserable farms in that place afforded wretched shelter for him and his staff. But after the toils and excitements passed through, utter weariness sweetened their repose.

Let us now cast a glance at the sight presented by the two armies facing each other, ready for battle.

After the events of the 16th of August Marshal Bazaine had given up the idea of continuing his westward retreat. It is true that the safety of Paris, the necessity

¹ General von Goeben, the well-known Commander of the VIIIth Corps, had also arrived at Flavigny.

to reinforce MacMahon's army defeated at Wörth, and even regard for the prolonged maintenance of his own army called him thither, but it was no longer possible to open the way without a new and bloody contest. The whole French army found itself in the early morning crowded together in a narrow space, and this coil had first to be disentangled ere the several columns could be set to march on the roads assigned to them. In the presence of the enemy the Marshal no doubt justly hesitated to execute such a manœuvre.

On the 6th, 14th and 16th August slight movements pointing to retreat had been for the Germans the signal for a stormy attack. Moreover, the troops were followed by an unwieldy baggage-train, which would probably have been lost. Again, the rank



AFRICAN CHASSEUR.

and file were momentarily short of provisions and ammunition. Both these requisites had first to be supplied. Accordingly he resolved to fall back on Metz, which could be done with little danger. To what extent he may also have been actuated by political motives, or whether in his heart he had cherished an ambitious desire to remain independent, uninfluenced by the Imperial Court, or had formed the plan to keep his army intact against the catastrophe which already seemed looming near, in order then at the head of these forces to play an important political rôle, these are secrets which Bazaine took with him into his grave. But there does not seem much probability of such having been the case, for immediately after battles such as that of Vionville the mind is little disposed to engage in subtle and far-reaching intrigues. Immediate consideration and pressing anxieties fully occupy the commander. No doubt the

main motive of the Marshal was the anxiety for the fate of his army, the fear lest, by marching forward, it might be broken in fragments by the superior forces of the Germans.

As a matter of fact, the position taken up by him was well fitted to shelter his army for the moment. The events of the 18th of August clearly shewed this, for spite of the superiority of the Germans the fate of the day hung on a hair.

His troops were drawn up in battle-array between Roncourt and Point-du-jour, on the important ridge whose side slopes down smooth and bare towards the west, and they immediately began to intrench themselves. The left flank was covered and supported by the works of Metz, close by; the right was exposed, but was near the valley of the Orne, and so far withdrawn from the opposing German left wing at Mars-la-Tour, that the distance between the two forces alone seemed to afford some security.

There stood the VIth French Corps, under Marshal Canrobert, with its vanguard at Ste. Marie-aux-Chênes, and with its main body at St. Privat; ¹ and near him, by Amanvillers, the IVth, under the command of General de Ladmirault; and then followed to the south, the IIIrd (Marshal Le Bœuf) upon the heights of Leipzig; and at the end the IIInd, General Frossard, at Le Point-du-Jour. To the latter was attached Lapasset's brigade of the Vth Corps, which had joined the army of Bazaine.

The Guards were the Marshal's reserve for the battle, but he drew them up behind his left wing at Plappeville, which was not imperilled and was strong enough without them. Forton's Cavalry Division was also kept there in readiness. Here alone his inmost thoughts and wishes, that clung to Metz and its guns, betrayed themselves. Behind the weaker right wing stood only General du Barail with his horse.

On the other side of them the Germans had remained on the battle-field of Vionville. On their extreme right wing at Ars and in the wood of Vaux stood the VIIth Corps under General von Zastrow. The VIIIth, General von Göben, was now assembled round Gorze, ready to advance upon Rezonville; the IXth, General von Manstein, stood on the heights of Flavigny. The IIIrd, General von Alvensleben II, had to break up for want of water, and was encamped partly at Flavigny and Vionville and partly near the Prince's Headquarters at Buxières. Further west stood the Xth Corps, General von Voigts-Rhetz, at Tronville; the Saxons, under their Crown Prince Albert, at Mars-la-Tour and Puxieux; the Prussian Guards, under Prince Augustus of Württemberg, at Suzemont and Hannonville-au-Passage, on the extreme left. Their vanguard had been pushed forward towards the north as far as the village of Porcher. Beyond it, towards the north-west, patrolled the Saxon Cavalry Division, which at night encamped at Parfondrupt. The 5th and 6th Cavalry Divisions reposed in the midst of the Second Army at Chambley and Tronville.

There is yet to be mentioned the IIInd Corps, General von Fransecky, which was hastening up by forced marches and had by this time arrived at Pont-à-Mousson; also the IVth, General von Alvensleben I, that stood in front of Toul; and the Ist, which, jointly with the 1st Cavalry Division, watched Metz from the east and the south. Towards the west, near the Maas, only the Brigade of the Uhlans of the Guard was patrolling. Thus the lines of battle facing each other formed a right angle; in the east, at the edge of the valley of the Moselle, at the Bois-de-Vaux, they nearly touched each other. The opposite wings, however, were separated by the wide space between Hannonville and Roncourt, three German miles (nearly 14 Engl. miles) as straight as the crow flies. Up to the French advanced-guard at Ste. Marie-aux-Chênes the whole of this inner tract of land was wholly bare of troops.

But this was not seen by the Germans, who had only reconnoitred the French left wing behind Gravelotte. The rest of the scene was still wrapt in uncertainty. It would evidently have been possible to clear it up. Men and fresh horses were at hand to find out the truth by a rapid ride to Vernéville and even as far as the Orne; thus Bazaine's position would have been known. Moreover, as this was, for the most part, already occupied by 3 o'clock in the afternoon, there would also have been no lack of time, for day-light lasted till 8 o'clock in the evening, and at night the camp-fires would have given clear indications to an observer.

¹ At first it was intended that the VIth Corps should remain in front at Vernéville, and not till later on did it prolong the line of battle to the north of Amanvillers.

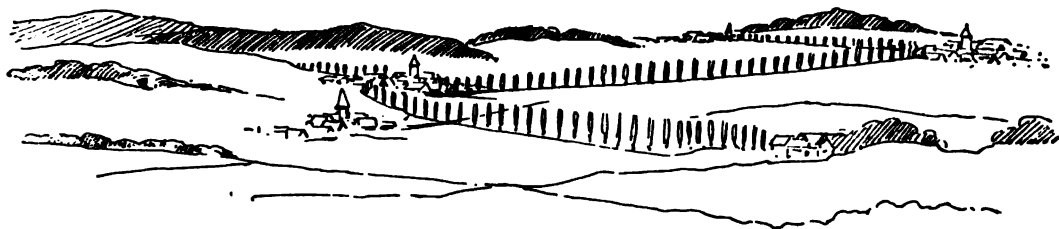
But on the 17th of August the Commanders were not fully conscious of their ignorance. The mighty impression of the battle just fought held their minds as with a spell, engaged on contemplating the past, forgetting that an action not less bloody and decisive was impending.

* * *

On the 18th of August, early in the morning, all the German camps were actively astir; the weariness after the great exertions of the 16th and 17th had vanished, and the day's work was entered upon with renewed vigour. The general expectation was that the retreating enemy would be met and attacked on the roads leading from Metz to the north-west, and driven into the mountains and woods towards the Luxemburg or Belgian frontier. It is true that on the 17th a portion of his forces had stood along the heights before Metz, but as yet nobody would believe that the *whole* was destined to lean on the fortress, still less to enter it, when its total destruction would only be a question of time. The right wing of the Germans, the First Army, directed its attention to the right. The Second Army on the left wing looked forward to successful fights against the flank- and rear-guards of the French. The Saxon Corps was envied, for on that day it was to hold the extreme left wing and thus be the advanced-guard in that direction. It seemed that it would secure the trophies of the previous dreadful struggles. A sense of security prevailed through the whole army; nobody doubted of our success, as the hardest work seemed to have been finished at Vionville; and there only two corps, supported by weak portions of two more, had been engaged, whereas to-day nearly the whole army was on the field, and would, they thought, have an easy task.

With wise prevision, however, the Commander-in-Chief took both the possible chances into consideration as well as our state of uncertainty. The Second Army was to-day primarily to move in a northern direction jointly with the VIIIth Corps of the First Army, pushing its left wing forward and holding back its right wing. The VIIth Army Corps was ordered to protect this movement from the side of Metz. All details were reserved for decision on the 18th itself. In this manner one was able to deal with both eventualities. If the enemy were in the act of retreating to the north-west, then he would be overtaken by the advanced left wing and compelled to halt till the other columns should come up. If he were halted before Metz, then a wheel of the left wing towards the right was already arranged for by the advance in échelon.

THE BATTLE OF GRAVELOTTE AND ST. PRIVAT-LA-MONTAGNE.



ST. AIL. STE. MARIE.

RONCOURT. HABONVILLE. ST. PRIVAT.

The neighbourhood of St. Privat and Roncourt, as seen from the point of view of Prince Frederick Charles on the afternoon of 18th August, 1870 (S. W. of Habonville).

(Contemporary sketch by Baron von der Goltz.)

Prince Frederick Charles arrived at 5 o'clock in the morning in the Saxon camp at Mars-la-Tour. Crown Prince Albert, the Prince of Württemberg, and General von Voigts-Rhetz awaited him there. Before the front of the army all was quiet; not a shot was fired. Verbal reports made to the Prince again informed him that on the previous evening the enemy had marched off to the west and north-west. Nevertheless he thought it possible that the French camp of yesterday in front of Metz had also disappeared. Reports from that quarter were still wanting. Time alone could bring certainty. He therefore ordered preliminarily a short advance as far as the highway leading from Metz, past Doncourt, to Conflans, and beyond to Verdun. At noon the army was to rest.

Then he rode over to Vionville, where he gave similar orders to Generals von Alvensleben and Von Manstein. From there a view was gained to the north and north-west of the landscape, which abounds in hills and valleys. Beyond the Tronville copses, which were so fiercely contested on the 16th of August, were seen the roofs of St. Marcel, and to the left of them a somewhat larger farm, probably Butricourt; behind it, Doncourt; further forward, between a little wood and avenues of trees, Bruville; and beside it, at some distance, Jarny, between heights, copses and the avenues of trees along the roads. The background was formed by more considerable heights crowned with woodlands, and probably beyond the Orne—an animated landscape. All telescopes were busily and anxiously examining it, but nothing was seen of the enemy. Everything kept quiet and we began to march.

General von Steinmetz had already on the evening of the 17th made his arrangements for the First Army. His task was primarily to protect the movements of the Second Army from the side of Metz.

When King William arrived at 6 o'clock in the morning on the heights of Flavigny, the advance of the whole line between Ars-sur-Moselle and Hannonville-au-Passage had already begun.

The VIIth Army Corps, which was to form the support and, if the wheeling to the right should take place, the pivot of the entire army, occupied both the edge of the Bois-de-Vaux, opposite the Point-du-Jour, where in fact the enemy was found in the morning still firmly posted, and the extremity of the Bois-des-Ognons, south of Gravelotte.

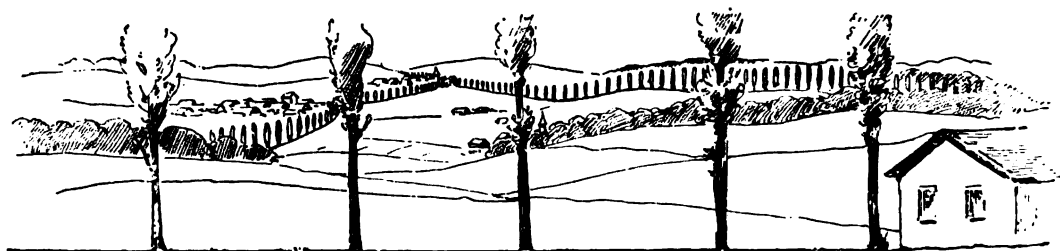
To the left of it the VIIIth Corps was marching from Gorze upon Rezonville, the

IXth was moving from Flavigny, by St. Marcel, upon Caulre-Ferme; the Guards upon Doncourt, the Saxons upon Jarny. In the second line the IIIrd Corps was to follow on the right with the 6th Division of Cavalry; on the left the Xth with the 5th, — all directed upon the intervals of the first line. From the rear, ever since 2 o'clock in the morning, the IInd Corps was hastening to the battle-field in another forced march; and from beyond the Moselle General von Manteuffel sent one of his brigades as far as the river to support the VIIth Corps, if need should be. Meanwhile the baggage-train remained behind, so as not to impede the forward march of the troops.

The simultaneous movement of the 200,000 men assembled came off, as a whole, without a hitch,¹ and seen from a bird's-eye view it must have been a splendid sight. But the mystery that hung over the intentions of the enemy was not yet cleared up.

Prince Frederick Charles learnt at Vionville, that Bruville and St. Marcel were free of French troops; peasants reported contradictorily that they had departed the day before to Verdun, to Briey, to Metz. From Gravelotte too, news arrived at first that the enemy was retiring; afterwards, however, it was reported he had halted.

On the right wing of the First Army, where we had the enemy in front of us,



JARNY. BRUVILLE. DONCOURT. ST. MARCEL.
Neighbourhood of Doncourt and Jarny, seen from the *chaussée* west of Vionville (point of view of Prince Frederick Charles on morning of 18th Aug. 1870).

(Contemporary sketch by Baron von der Goltz.)

batteries and masses of infantry were seen early at the Point-du-Jour and large camps to the north of it, at Moscou and Leipzig. Skirmishing began early at the Bois-de-Vaux and at Gravelotte, General von Göben therefore halted his VIIIth Corps at Rezonville to await developments.

At Flavigny King William and General von Moltke received reports from both wings. As early as at 8 o'clock in the morning they became convinced that the enemy was halting before Metz. Prince Frederick Charles was informed of it, and now he ordered that the IXth Army Corps should halt at Caulre-Ferme, the Guards Corps at Doncourt and the Saxons at Jarny. The IIIrd Army Corps was ordered, provisionally, to stop at Vionville, and the Xth at Bruville as soon as they arrived there.

Then report came in from the left wing, that the enemy had been seen at Valleroy, a short distance to the west of Auboué; the IXth Army Corps reported, that their patrols sent forward to the north and the north-east had seen nothing of the enemy. Even from the Royal Head-Quarters the Prince was informed once more, that it seemed that the troops standing on the heights before Metz were moving

¹ Only the Saxons and the Guards Corps crossed each other at Mars-la-Tour.

northwards, probably towards Briey. All those who had believed that the French were marching away, found their opinions apparently confirmed. Even when afterwards the country round Valleroy was found actually free of the enemy, this conviction was not yet wholly abandoned. When subsequently the true connection of things is known, one is inclined to find inconceivable the doubts and delusions of such critical moments. But he that has stood in the midst of such warlike events understands them very well. The grains of truth that lead to the right track are preserved by history, and it is forgotten that they were hidden in clouds of chaff of erroneous reports and assumptions. One forgets how much harder it was at the decisive moment of action to distinguish between the true and the false, than afterwards, when the whole development of events can be looked back upon.

Moreover, the brave and experienced enemy was held in respect, and he was credited with doing what was considered the right thing to be done. Even later on, long after the commencement of the battle and when the firing had extended further and further to the north, as far as St. Privat-la-Montagne and beyond it, more than one voice was heard to declare that, as a matter of fact, the enemy had been overtaken in the act of marching away, and that we had come in contact with his left flank.

Not till 11 o'clock did Prince Frederick Charles receive the important report: "French camp at St. Privat-la-Montagne," and almost at the same time the decisive news arrived from the Head-Quarters of the King: "The enemy was standing on the plateau between Le Point-du-Jour and Montigny-la-Grange, and that it seemed that he intended to maintain that position." To this was added the laconic order: "Simultaneous attack by the First Army from Bois-de-Vaux and Gravelotte, by the IXth Army Corps in the direction of Bois-des-Genivaux and Vernéville, and by the left wing of the Second Army from further north." The movement of the Second Army, interrupted at the highway to Conflans, had meanwhile been resumed. Only the Saxon Corps had as yet received no orders to this effect, but was kept waiting at Jarny till the situation should be clearly understood. Now the whole army was to take the direction towards Metz, and attack the enemy so as to finish the work begun on the 14th and 16th.

Orders were immediately despatched in every direction.

* * *

Skirmishing on the right wing of the First Army became more animated, but the real battle had not yet begun. About noon the thunder of artillery was heard from the direction of Vernéville. It quickly got louder and louder, the cracking of the mitrailleuses and the rattle of musketry fire soon joined in. The noise of the battle increased with unparalleled violence. There was now no doubt that the battle was opened. The IXth Army Corps was already hotly engaged. An order from Prince Frederick Charles to still postpone a more serious engagement arrived too late.

Let us now glance at the positions of the German forces at this moment.

On the extreme right wing stood the VIIth Corps, with its main body south of Gravelotte, the rest by the edge of the Bois-de-Vaux, opposite the Point-du-Jour. The VIIth stood ready for advance at Rezonville and Villiers-aux-Bois; near them fought the IXth, in advance of Vernéville. The Guards had started from Doncourt and were marching upon Habonville, to their left the Saxons were moving from Jarny in the

were seen there, a great French camp, "which apparently lay in careless repose." The last order of battle of the Prince was to the effect that the corps should attack if the right wing of the French stood there, and this was not the case. But the opportunity seemed too enticing and favourable to be lost. Moreover, the pieces of woodland north of Vernéville to its left concealed the French forces at St. Privat from us. No doubt too the idea which had got about in the morning, that the French lines could only extend as far as La Folie or Montigny, had its effect. General von Manstein resolved to take them by surprise; his ardent zeal started the battle prematurely. Quickly, before the infantry was yet able to follow, the greater part of the artillery was called up and hurled its shot from Vernéville and Montigny upon the French, who did not expect so warm a greeting.

Then the heights opposite started into life. It was the IVth Corps of the French that had been so roughly scared out of its repose. But General Ladmirault had prepared the defence, and quickly the edge of the heights was crowned by guns and mitrailleuses. Dense lines of infantry appeared and occupied the shelter-trenches previously dug. A stream of fire poured down the gentle slope, and soon death reaped a rich harvest in the German batteries.

On the right, facing the Bois-de-la-Cusse, stood the French Division (de Cissey), and on the left Grenier's Division, by Amanvillers and Montigny-la-Grange. Lorencez's Division formed the reserve. The whole artillery of this corps opened fire. To the left the firing extended along the line of the IIIrd Corps, and soon it also sprung up on the right, in the direction of St. Privat, where the VIth Corps was posted. Now the unexpected extent of the French position was unfolded to the surprised gaze of the Germans.

There was no doubt now, that the IXth German Corps had encountered the strong French centre, instead of outflanking the right wing, as had been hoped. But it was too late to make any change. Already the enemy began to direct his attacks against the batteries planted in front of him. The battalions of the 18th Division, which, led by General von Wrangel, stood at the head of the IXth Corps, breathlessly hastened up, in order, with a supreme effort, to repel the assault. At the right of the artillery the farm of L'envie was seized just in time, and at the left the Bois-de-la-Cusse was occupied, although at first but feebly. The first onset of the enemy's firing-line was repelled by rapid firing, but they found cover opposite in hedges and gardens and in the farm



GENERAL V. MANSTEIN.

of Champenois. From a safe distance they poured their shot into the German lines, from their rifles of longer range.¹

Towards the south, the farm of Chantrenne was occupied, but here too all further advance was impossible. Very superior French forces were encountered in the wood of Genivaux, close in front of it.

Soon the few Prussian battalions were in as difficult a position as their artillery, and yet the battle had hardly commenced. The first help came from the Hessian Division, led by Prince Louis, which was following the eighteenth. When General von Manstein saw that the right wing of the enemy extended far beyond Amanvillers, he had ordered the Hessians to turn aside northwards of the Bois-de-la-Cusse, and to establish connection with the Guards, who, jointly with the IXth Corps, might attack the enemy, outflank and overthrow him. But waiting was no longer possible. The contest at

Amanvillers had become too fierce to leave the troops there under fire for any length of time without assistance. Five Hessian batteries occupied the gentle underfeature east of Habonville. Their firing called into line the whole of the French VIth Corps on both sides of St. Privat. Thither the guns were now directed. Near and in front of the batteries the infantry soon deployed by the Bois-de-la-Cusse, as well as in the trough of the valley at the foot of the heights of Amanvillers.

By 2 o'clock in the afternoon nearly the whole of the IXth Corps was engaged. Outflanked by the enemy both on the right and on the left it had been forced largely to extend itself. It formed between the wood of Genivaux and Habonville a line 4000 metres (= 2½ Engl. miles) long, forming, so to speak, two fronts, one on the right, towards the south-east, in the direction



GENERAL LADMIRAULT.

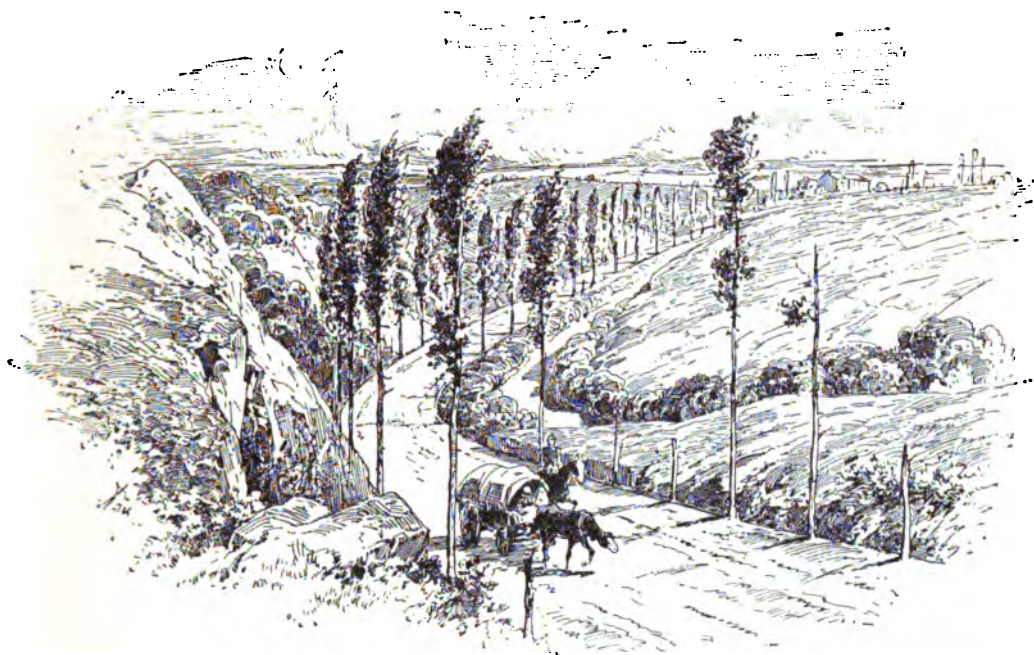
of Montigny-la-Grange; and the other turned north-east, towards St. Privat. Opposite the centre lay Amanvillers, in a sheltered space amid the fire of both parties, being hidden by elevations of the ground, above which only the church steeple was visible. With utmost effort only did the 15 batteries hold their own; five of them had to leave the firing-line, in order to refit in rear. Men had to turn the wheels where horses were wanting; gun was attached to gun, to be dragged to the rear; some were left standing, but were afterwards, with fresh horses, again brought into line.

The attempts of the infantry on both wings to advance, or at least to drive the dangerous swarms of the enemy's skirmishers far enough back to prevent their molesting the artillery, were all in vain. It was only with great losses that each onset was

¹ The Prussians were armed with their old "Zündnadelgewehr" (needle-gun), the French had the "Chassepot," a weapon of later invention and of longer range. The French had hopelessly nicknamed their arm "Chasse Prusses." [*Trs.*]

arrested; the situation was very grave; here and there the enemy began to attack, and not till half-past four in the afternoon, when we had succeeded in seizing the farm of Champenois, did the position become a little more secure.

Meanwhile some further help had come up. The IIIrd Army Corps had been standing at Vernéville since 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and had sent six of its batteries forward into the fighting-line. They arrived in the nick of time. A part also, of the batteries of the IXth Corps, that had fallen back and received fresh horses and ammunition, returned once more to the field covered with dead and wounded, on which they had been stationed. At last, after a hot struggle of nearly five hours, the German



THE RAVINE NEAR GRAVELOTTE, WITH ST. HUBERT.
(Sketch by Zick, 30th August, 1870.)

artillery began to make its superiority felt. The much thinned lines of the infantry breathed a sigh of relief. From time to time the French artillery was silent.

At 5 o'clock in the afternoon the most pressing danger was over for a time. Spite of the losses suffered, there still stood, actively firing, 106 pieces of artillery in the line of battle between Chantrenne and Habonville. Along here the infantry had formed into groups,—of course unable to advance, but still fully resolved not to yield a step. Like two wrestlers, gripping each other with utmost effort, neither, however, able to display any additional strength, these two opponents stood here facing each other.

On the right wing the battle had commenced long ago.

When at noon the thunder of artillery resounded over from Vernéville, the batteries of the VIIIth and VIIth Corps hastened to the heights of Gravelotte to open fire and to bombard the intrenched positions of the enemy at Moscou and Point-du-Jour. At 1

o'clock in the afternoon 108 pieces of artillery were in full activity on both sides of the village. The VIIIth Army Corps advanced from Rezonville to Gravelotte and took position to the left of the VIIth. The latter stood south of that extensive place and, moreover, outflanked the French left, as it had done the day before, by the edges of the wood south of the Point-du-Jour as far as the Moselle. Behind the left wing of the First Army was placed the 1st Division of Cavalry at Malmaison.

In front of the Germans at Gravelotte was the valley of the Mance, here already deeply scooped out. Below, in a strip of meadow land, the brook winds along between steep and woody declivities. The great highway from Gravelotte to Metz, which ascends and descends through deep cuttings, crosses the brook on a narrow embankment.



GENERAL V. STEINMETZ.

Through this defile lay the ascent to the opposite edge of the bare declivities, which gradually rise to the strongly intrenched summit, at that time crowned with numerous French artillery. In rear the descent is steeper, and thus it afforded good protection and masked positions to the French reserves. Opposite the gangway lies the large, massively built farm of St. Hubert, blocking it at short range. A stronger position in the open field can hardly be imagined.

The Divisions of Metman and Aymard¹ of the IIIrd French Corps held the heights of Leipzig and Moscou as far as the highway, whilst further on the Divisions of Montaudon and Nayral were opposed to the right wing of our IXth Corps. Vergé's Division of the IInd French Corps held the line from the highway as far as the Point-du-Jour and the extensive quarries; behind and to the south-east of it was

Bastoul's Division, while Lapasset's Brigade at St. Ruffine closed up the valley of the Moselle. About sixty battalions and 100 guns faced our First Army on the narrow front between Leipzig and the Point-du-Jour.

At Gravelotte General Steinmetz had been watching the enemy ever since the morning hours. In accordance with the plan of the battle he was to wait till an outflanking attack against the enemy's right wing should be possible, and then he was to advance from Bois-de-Vaux and Gravelotte. But the sound of the battle at Vernéville kept growing louder, and urged him to hasten his attack.

The artillery was reinforced, and at two o'clock it numbered 132 guns, and advanced nearer to the valley of the Mance.

¹ Men with German names in French service are mostly Alsations, or Lorrainers. [*Trs.*]

Swarms of French skirmishers were there, hidden in the copses. The farm of St. Hubert was strongly occupied by the actual line of battle. Accordingly, the infantry could not put off beginning the fight much longer. On a broad front, General von Weltzien led his 15th Division forward on both sides of the great highway. In a fierce contest it worked its way through the deep valley and toilsomely climbed up on the other side. But as the advancing swarms of infantry issued forth from the wood into the open they were met by absolute streams of fire, which quickly thinned their ranks and drove them back to the edge of the valley. In the centre the attacks were made first against the farm of St. Hubert, which soon became the objective of the efforts made by all the troops near it. It was set ablaze, but still the French maintained themselves in its out-buildings and behind the garden walls. At last at 3 o'clock in the afternoon a renewed general rush was made without any special order or coherent guidance. The fortified farm fell, was immediately occupied by the conquerors, and prepared as best it might be for defence towards the east.

This success became the signal for a new advance right and left. With difficulty and heavy losses we succeeded on the right in taking from the French the gravel-pits, situated between the wood and the Point-du-Jour. Even a part of the stone-quarries close by the Point-du-Jour came into temporary possession of our brave infantry. To the left all onsets against Moscou were bloodily repelled. In advance of our front St. Hubert alone remained in German hands, like a bridge-head protecting the defile of Gravelotte. But the 15th Division had spent well-nigh all its strength.

Already General von Göben was sending forward, under command of General Count Gneisenau, the foremost Brigade (the 31st) of the 16th Division, which was still halted at Gravelotte; it also crossed the woody valley on the well-known paths, by and north of the highway. Soon the fuller rattle of musketry fire announced its arrival in the fighting-line.

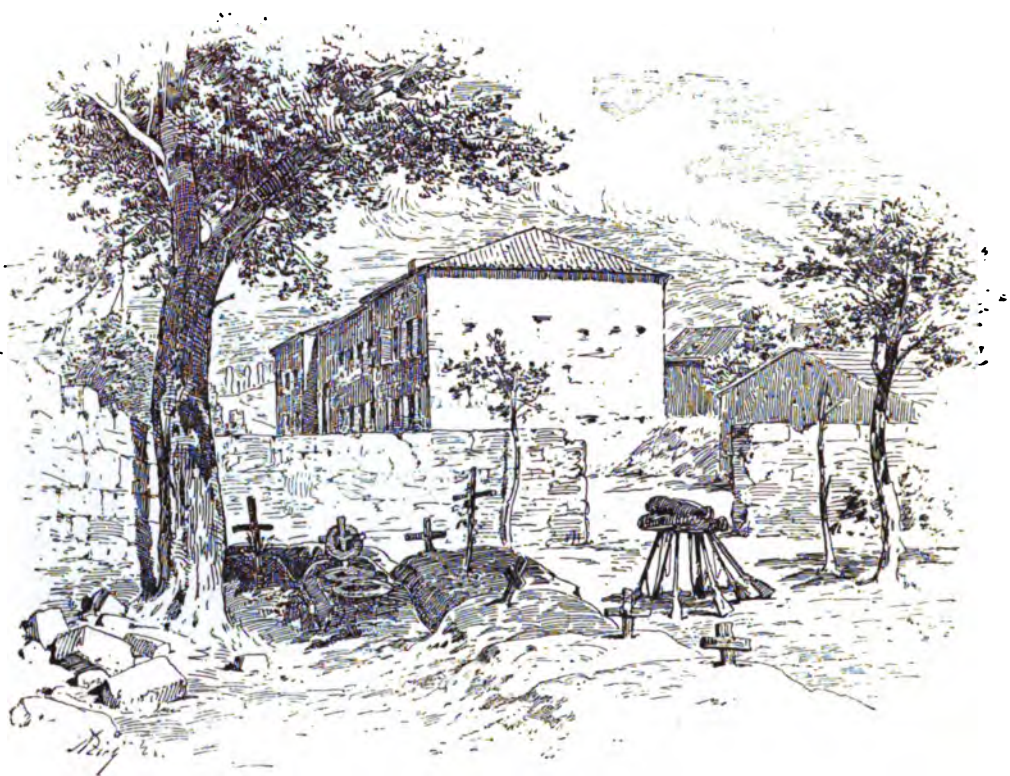
From the point of observation of General von Steinmetz, who stood north of Gravelotte and nearer the fighting-line, the view presented by the field appeared at that time very favourable. The superiority of the Prussian artillery was evident. From St. Hubert, which we had captured, the enemy was to be seen falling back in disorder towards the heights, and even there also troubled movements were perceptible.



GENERAL VON SPERLING.
(Chief of the General Staff of the First Army Corps.)

It seemed as though the retreat upon Metz had begun, and that all that was needed was, by a powerful rush, to overthrow the enemy altogether. Accordingly the General ordered a more combined attack. At the valley of the Moselle, General von der Goltz was to lead forward the 26th Brigade from Ars towards Vaux; in the front the VIIth Corps was to push forward a part of its artillery beyond the Mance valley, and bring forward to the bottom of the valley the 27th Brigade which was halted south of Gravelotte. The 1st Division of Cavalry was intended to ride through the narrow defile and to hurl itself on the retreating enemy.

But what was believed to have been seen turned out to be a fateful delusion.



ST. HUBERT FARM.

(Sketch by Zick, 30th August 1870.)

True the enemy had lost his advanced post, and the troops expelled thence had taken refuge with the main line. But this would not yield. Its batteries were silent, to escape destruction and to reserve themselves for the decisive moment.

When now the great attack began, the enemy's fire awoke to new life with undiminished fury. Only three Prussian batteries succeeded with utmost effort in reaching St. Hubert. Two of them gloriously perished, one soon, the other after two hours' fight; the third maintained its position till the evening. The cavalry division was forced to turn back in the defile itself, as it was impossible to lead it out into the open field, exposed as it was to artillery. It could not even have deployed.

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THE 39TH RIFLES OF THE LOWER RHINE AT GRAVELOTTE.

[face p. 171.

A wild crush now occurred in the defile, into which shells, rifle bullets, and grape from the mitrailleuses were poured. True the infantry gained the opposite edge, but having once gained this position it could advance no further.¹ Amidst the devastating fire parts of all the troops engaged crowded at last round and behind St. Hubert. At the edge of the wood south of the Point-du-Jour the battle continued, and at the edge of the valley of the Moselle it had begun against the strong position of Lapasset's Brigade.

At 4 o'clock General von der Goltz had advanced from Ars with the 26th Brigade, had occupied Vaux and then worked his way through vineyards and up heights against the well-covered foe, and had even in a fortunate contest captured Jussy. There and in front of the edge of the wood he deployed his battalions. To advance further would not have been possible, nor was it his task to do so. In the fortified villages of St. Ruffine and Rozerieulles he was confronted by an enemy as strong as himself; beyond on the heights east of the Point-du-Jour and on St. Quentin there was French artillery, which he could have bombarded only with a single battery. The insufficiency of his forces did not allow him to bring on a decisive action.

At 5 o'clock in the afternoon the battle along the whole line of the First Army came to a stand-still. On both sides the firing began to slacken, and at times to be altogether silent.

About the same time King William, with Moltke and the suite of the Great Head Quarters, arrived at Gravelotte, and they took up a position between this village and Malmaison. Fresh forces came up. After a long and wearisome march General von Fransecky had brought the Ind Army Corps to Rezonville. He received orders to advance to Gravelotte and support the First Army. At 6 o'clock he was on his march thither, and the King ordered General von Steinmetz now to bring up into the fight the last troops still at his disposal. From the north a violent thunder of artillery was heard, and this announced that the Second Army was hotly engaged.

There still remained at Gravelotte Colonel von Rex with the 32nd Infantry Brigade of the VIIIth Corps. Orders were sent him to cross the Mance valley. The VIIth Corps also was to send against the enemy all the troops which still were assembled south of Gravelotte on the hither side of the wooded valley. General von Göben personally rode to St. Hubert, there to bring order into the motley jumble of troops and to make arrangements for maintaining possession of this important point.

The newly brought troops had not yet reached the enemy's line, when he woke again into new life. Once more dense white clouds of smoke crowned the French positions, the thunder of artillery and the rattle of the mitrailleuses awoke with unheard-of intensity. The bullets of the chassepot rifles struck as far off as Gravelotte, where King William was stationed; dense swarms of skirmishers rushed forward from the defensive positions in order to press back towards the edges of the wood by the Mance brook the wearied assailants, who were holding their own in the open field. The French reserves had been called up into the first line.

At 3 o'clock in the afternoon, as the battle raged more fiercely, Marshal Bazaine had ridden up on to the plateau of St. Quentin and had ordered the Corps of Guards to advance. His chief anxiety was of course for his left wing. But for all that, this

¹ Along with the 31st Infantry Brigade there was also the 39th Regiment belonging to the 27th Brigade.

experienced commander had not forgotten his right wing, and had warned Marshal Canrobert to be on his guard, and to intrench himself strongly in his positions. Early he had reinforced him with cavalry and artillery. Now in the afternoon he sent to his right wing his division of grenadier-guards and his reserve artillery. One brigade of voltigeurs of the guard hastened behind his IIIrd Corps, and the other he still retained near himself. He himself remained behind his left wing, there to watch over its defence.

So the German onset was met by an onset of the French. For a moment it seemed as if all the acquisitions of the first five hours were to be lost again. There was even spread the false report that St. Hubert had again been lost, and Prussian troops advanced against it. But now there came across the Mance valley the 32nd Brigade and the battalions of the VIIth Corps. Wave met wave and each broke the force of the other.

The Prussian skirmishers advanced right up to the French positions. A small body of brave infantry collected and, led by energetic officers, once more took by storm a great part of the quarries at the Point-du-Jour. They shewed the right way and at the same time the shortest for the decisive attack. It led from the country south of Gravelotte, where at first the greater part of the VIIth, and later of the IInd Corps had stood, past the Mance mill, through the Bois-de-Vaux into the left flank of the enemy's position. But the God of battles had hidden it from the leaders, and the brave men who had found it out were no longer able to send news of their success, which accordingly remained unobserved. The stream of fire from the highway, which was full of troops, and from the shelter-trenches once more arrested our advance.

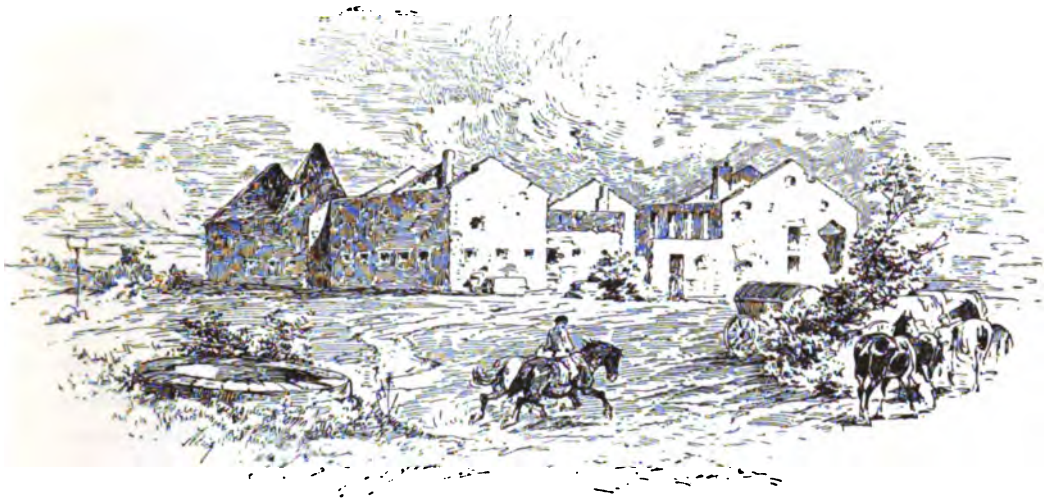
The day had begun to decline when the IInd Army Corps appeared at the entrance of the Gravelotte defile. The solitary poplar-trees near the farm of the Point-du-Jour, which had been burnt down, were given them as their objective. It was too late, and the troops were too little acquainted with the country to let them advance through the dense wood on both sides of the road. Once more all pressed forward along the narrow highway swept by projectiles, and joined the confused crowd, consisting of remnants of all the troops engaged, which had formed round St. Hubert. Space was lacking to deploy these large numbers, and time was wanting to make their effect felt. Only a few batteries of the corps could be placed in line at Gravelotte. The whole 3rd Division, under General von Hartmann, did indeed cross the defile, in the constantly increasing darkness, and stormed the enemy's lines, indicated by the gleam of their musketry fire. They approached near the lines, but could not penetrate them.

Parts of the 4th Division followed in the press at St. Hubert. Many of the higher commanders went there personally to regulate and stimulate the men. This was that historical moment when General von Moltke rode up to his own regiment of infantry, the Colberg, to lead them forward himself. As a strategist he had done his work by concentrating the army and arranging for the great change of front to the right, and now he had time free to play the part of an executive leader of troops¹—a moment of relaxation after the stern toil of the mind and anxious struggle of his soul with his responsibility and resolves.

¹ Moltke was then 70 years old. [*Trs.*]

In the darkness the battle on this wing resolved itself into a series of combats of groups. Friend and foe were no longer to be distinguished. Projectiles swept the field from every side, and made it doubtful what direction should be taken. At last came the order to stop the fight, and firing ceased after 10 o'clock p.m. The least disordered troops of the IInd Corps formed the first line, close to the French and facing them; the VIIth and VIIIth Corps assembled behind them to be ready on the morrow for fresh work.

Moscou, Leipzig and Point-du-Jour had remained in the hands of the enemy and all efforts to dislodge him had failed. Nevertheless the great losses had not been suffered in vain. The attack of the First Army had riveted Bazaine's attention to



MOSCOU FARM.

(Sketch by Zick, 30th August, 1870.)

his left wing and prevented timely and adequate support being sent to his right wing; there, however, the fate of the battle had meanwhile been decided.

* * *

When Prince Frederick Charles at noon had issued the orders for the change of direction to the right of his army, he galloped to the field of battle. On the way he passed the 2nd Division of the Guards as they were marching upon Vernéville; he ordered them to turn aside further north towards Habonville, so as to give them a more effective direction against the right wing of the enemy.

Already the 1st Division of the Guards had hurried forward to that place, and soon its artillery thundered against the French batteries of St. Privat, from behind a ravine south-west of St. Ail. The Corps Artillery also came up here and increased the firing.

From here the French line of battle could be overlooked as far as up to St. Privat-la-Montagne. Long gentle slopes ascend to the high ridge occupied by the enemy.

This ridge, which we already know from Point-du-Jour as far as Amanvillers, forms at St. Privat a broad, gently curved dome, on which stands the extensive village, consisting of lofty, massively built houses, and overlooking the whole country. It was the key of the position. By its loss the right wing of the French line of battle was broken, and from there the whole could be rolled up. It is a fixed law of war that the assailant conquers, if he breaks the resistance on the decisive points. But it was obvious from the outset that the assault would be a difficult and bloody piece of work. Moreover, the lines of the defenders extended to the neighbouring village of Roncourt, so that St. Privat could not be outflanked at once. The VIth French Corps and Cissey's Division of the IVth, about 40,000 men with 92 guns, occupied this northern part of the French line of battle.

Prince Frederick Charles, who had first ridden to Vernéville, as we are aware, to reinforce the German centre with some artillery from the IIIrd Corps and make it safe against being broken through, afterwards betook himself past Anoux-la-Grange in the direction of Habonville. There he perceived the state of affairs at St. Privat-la-Montagne, and made this most important place his objective.

The enemy's vanguard¹ was at first still at the foot of the position. With difficulty the head of the 1st Division of the Guards had anticipated it in taking possession of St. Ail. General von Pape, who had hastened in front of his troops, also found Ste. Marie-aux-Chênes occupied; thither he directed his march and deployed his advanced guard against that village. At half-past two in the afternoon the main body of the 1st Division of the Guards arrived at the rear of the little wood south-west of Ste. Marie.

Meanwhile Prince Frederick Charles had received instructions from Moltke that the real general assault by the whole line should not be made before considerable forces should be able to advance inclining inwards from Amanvillers—apparently meaning until a considerable force should have turned the enemy's right flank; for this was believed to be posted south of Amanvillers. Accordingly the Guards were ordered to operate only with artillery, and not allow the infantry to advance before the Saxons could make their attack felt.

Crown Prince Albert² had already been informed at Batilly by his scouts that the enemy was still posted north of St. Privat, and accordingly, turning aside further towards the north, he advanced with his 23rd Division past Coinville, and with his 24th and the Corps Artillery upon Ste. Marie-aux-Chênes. The latter arrived west of the village shortly before 3 o'clock; several batteries soon formed a circle of fire round this village, and at half-past 3 it was taken by storm by the Guards and by the Saxons. Those of the garrison who escaped fled in disorder towards their main position on the heights.

The space needful to deploy the German line of battle on the left wing was now won. The artillery of the Guards advanced and posted itself between Habonville and St. Ail, a part of it in front of the latter village. The 1st Division of the Guards deployed at Ste. Marie fronting St. Privat. The 2nd Division had to separate: Colonel von Knappstaedt, in accordance with orders from Prince Frederick Charles, led the 3rd Infantry Brigade of the Guards to Habonville to reinforce the IXth Corps;

¹ See footnote on p. 159. [*Trs.*]

² Of Saxony, in command of the Saxons. [*Trs.*]

the 4th took up a position south of Ste. Marie to the right of the 1st Division of the Guards. The cavalry halted at Batilly.

The Saxons pursued their march. Only the 47th Brigade stood united at Ste. Marie, where it had come into action. North of it the whole artillery was deployed. The 45th Brigade went to the little wood at Auboué and passed through it in skirmishing order. The 46th and 48th Brigades marched down the valley of the Orne. The cavalry division reconnoitred forward and towards the west, and accompanied the march of the outflanking column. The objective of this column was Montois-la-Mon-



PRINCE AUGUSTUS OF WÜRTTEMBERG.

tagne, north-west of Roncourt; for the Crown Prince Albert thought he perceived French artillery even to the north of that village.

Such was the change which the nearer approach wrought in the aspect of affairs. The outflanking movement had had to extend further and further towards the north. It was originally hoped that it would be possible to fall upon the enemy's right flank from Amanvillers; now it was found that this would be done from beyond Montois, half a German mile (upwards of 2 Engl. miles) further north. The great extent which Marshal Bazaine had given to his line of battle was a violation of the rules of the art of war, and no strategist skilled in approved methods will commend it. But by it he took his assailant by surprise and he very nearly succeeded in his ¹ object.

¹ General von Moltke says: "In war one has to deal with probabilities, and the most probable is that the enemy will do the right thing." [*Trs.*]

If it had been a short winter's day, the night would have put a stop to the battle at the point now arrived at, and during the night the Marshal would have had time so to reinforce his threatened right wing as to enable it to withstand the assault.

Meanwhile at Ste. Marie and St. Ail the artillery combat was raging, but the balance soon inclined in favour of the Germans. The audacious enemy repeatedly advanced upon our lines of artillery, but he was every time repelled by the sure aim of the guns. Soon after 4 o'clock the French batteries at St. Privat began to be



ST. PRIVAT-LA-MONTAGNE: POINT OF ATTACK OF THE 2ND AND 4TH REGIMENTS OF THE GUARDS.
(Drawn by E. Mattschaff, October 1870.)

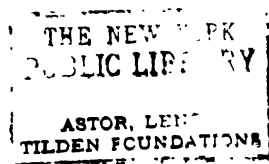
silenced, and half an hour later, the fight almost completely ceased, not only here, but along the whole line. It was the calm preceding the storm.

After 5 o'clock the battle was renewed in the centre about the IXth Corps, and General von Manstein now ordered the 3rd Brigade of the Guards to attack. The church tower of Amanvillers indicated to them their direction. They advanced in splendid order, deployed for action along the same road by which the Hessians and the Holsteiners of the 18th Division had already made an attempt. Their battalions too were struck in the face by a hail of bullets coming down the smooth slope; and their lines were quickly thinned. Some batteries from the position of the IXth Corps accompanied them; skilfully they made use of every trifling rise of the ground affording cover; after every halt they rushed forward, and finally they succeeded in gaining



CROWN PRINCE ALBERT OF SAXONY AT THE BATTLE OF GRAVELOTTE.
(By permission of the Photographic Society of Berlin.)

[face p. 176.



more ground than on the previous occasion. Up to 6 o'clock these brave men had worked their way towards the foe,—to within 800 paces of Amanvillers, but enter they could not; after such heavy losses their strength was spent.

At Chantrenne things were much the same. As the IIIrd Corps had undertaken the defence of Vernéville, General von Wrangel was able to call up the last sections of his division which had been posted there. But spite of everything, they failed to wrest from the French the wood in front of La Folie. After 7 o'clock in the evening the struggle here also subsided, and only the artillery of the IIIrd Corps directed a hot fire against the wood, from which now a portion of its defenders fled to the rear to avoid the hail of shot.

Meanwhile at Ste. Marie-aux-Chênes Prince Augustus of Württemberg¹ had determined to make an assault. It is true that the result of the outflanking movement round the French right wing was to be waited for, but nobody could have supposed that this would have to stretch out so far as now was actually the case. Doubts were raised as to whether it would now be possible to carry it out at all. But the battle which had been begun, and had already demanded such heavy sacrifice, had to be brought to a decision. A termination without a decision might have cost us the victory, for during the night things would have changed in favour of the French. At 5 o'clock troops of the enemy on the heights were moving from St. Privat down to Amanvillers against the IXth Corps, which up till then had had the hardest fight, and it could no longer be left without effective support.

Only three hours more of daylight could be counted upon; it was thought that no further delay was permissible, and only he that has never been in such a position, has never passed through such an hour, will find fault with this resolve, because it was afterwards seen that it would have been better to have waited still longer.

At Habonville it was impossible to perceive what was happening beyond Sainte Marie, but the smoke rising from the Saxon batteries was clearly seen, their fire seemed to be directed towards the north. Again doubts arose, as to whether there, on the left flank, parts of the hostile army, previously retreating, had not joined in the fight. At home the theorist in his study thinks that nothing is easier than speedily to discover the truth on such points; but perplexities of the battle, the mingling of the troops, the confusion of the most varied opinions, of false and correct reports—all contribute to hide the truth; to say nothing of the distances to be passed over. How difficult it is to find a General on the field, whom yet many people declare that they have seen here or there. Every one is busy with himself, and an enquiring aide-de-camp or staff-officer, if left in the lurch by good luck, has the greatest difficulty in finding the men from whom he is to obtain information. Be as subtle as you may, uncertainty cannot be banished from the battle-field. Conviction must be gained from the general aspect of things and from the impressions of the moment, and it is just for this reason that the direction of a great battle is probably the hardest problem which can be set to the mind of man.² Even men of the most commanding talent can be led astray in its solution. In the full conviction of the

¹ Commander of the Guards Corps. [Trs.]

² In antiquity, when gunpowder smoke did not enwrap the field of battle and the contest could be clearly seen from end to end, this problem was much easier of solution. [Trs.]

soundness of Prince Augustus' resolve, Prince Frederick Charles gave his assent, and the Corps of Guards stepped forward.

At about a quarter-past 5 the Commander of the 2nd Division of the Guards personally led the 4th Brigade south of the great highway. His objective was the outlying buildings of Jerusalem, the part of the village of St. Privat extending towards Amanvillers. Over there, on the heights, the enemy lay in dense swarms behind hedges and shelter-trenches, beyond the short range of our needle-guns, and difficult to be hit by the artillery. The brigade, that was advancing in excellent order and duly deployed for battle, was met by the rapid fire of the chassepot rifles, which made large gaps in its lines. The rifle bullets that had missed their mark ricocheted from the hard soil and killed their man. No fold of the ground offered cover, and

even the re-entrants sloping down from the height towards St. Ail were swept by shot.



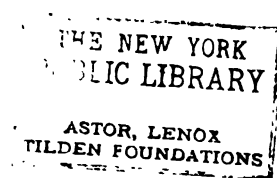
GENERAL V. PAPE.

Nevertheless the brave battalions pushed on, many being soon deprived of their commanders,—nay, of almost all their officers. On the right wing of the brigade the enemy was overthrown. A spur of the plateau of St. Privat juts out a long way in the direction of Habonville; it was climbed by the Guards, who then disappeared behind the high hedge-rows; the enemy withdrawing towards Jerusalem. From the neighbourhood of Habonville, whence the village could be seen apparently close beyond this, it seemed as if the brave combatants must already have entered it, and, unfortunately prematurely, it was believed that they had taken St. Privat at the first rush.

Only the edge of the heights was in possession of the 4th Brigade of

the Guards, and further along towards the highway it had not even been possible to reach the enemy's first line. At a quarter to 7 the attack was arrested, nevertheless the remnants of the brigade gained a firm footing on the edge, close before the enemy.

Half an hour later than the 4th Brigade the 1st Division of the Guards had also advanced to the assault. True, General von Pape, who could from Ste. Marie watch the progress of the Saxon Corps, desired to wait, but the general movement had been set going and there was no delaying. The 1st Brigade of the Guards, commanded by General von Kessel, moved in the first line north of Ste. Marie on St. Privat. Events similar to those south of the high road were repeated here. The path of the battalions was marked by broad tracks of dead and wounded which covered the field, and very soon almost all the Commanders were *hors de combat*. The losses were here





ASSAULT UPON ST. PRIVAT.

even greater than there. In spite of all, the men came on the right wing within 900, and on the left wing within 600 paces of the enemy. Not till then did the attack of such remnants as were still effective become slack.

It was due to a fateful accident that the village of St. Privat-la-Montagne had escaped the fire of the artillery. The batteries of the Guards before St. Ail had directed their fire against the crest south of the village, the Saxon batteries at Ste. Marie against Roncourt. Between these two zones of fire St. Privat lay uninjured. The French infantry was able to receive our storming lines with perfect tranquillity, for the Prussian bullets could not at first reach them.

General von Pape now called up four batteries, which came into action at 1000 paces range from the village and poured in their shells; others followed. Gradually the whole artillery of the Guards came up, and from Batilly there came two horse-batteries of the Xth Corps. Up till 7 o'clock in the evening fourteen batteries formed two great groups in front of Habonville and St. Ail, the southern group bombarding Amanvillers, the northern St. Privat. Here too the flames soon burst forth, the garrison began to leave the gardens and fields enclosed by walls, and gathered more closely round the buildings of the village. The fire of the chassepots grew slacker, and the battalions of the Guards, unable to advance, unwilling to retreat, steadfastly maintained their ground. A whole hour they endured this rain of bullets; the hardest trial to which discipline can be subjected.

To fill up the gap between the two brigades along the high road, General von Pape sent in the 2nd Regiment of the Grenadier Guards. To give a support to the left he sent the 4th Regiment of the Guards after them. Only the Fusiliers of the Guards were left behind at Ste. Marie, as a last reserve.

The enemy still swept the Prussian line from Roncourt, and some troops on the flank had to be directed against that place. But now relief came; the Saxon Corps arrived. After 5 o'clock the 45th Brigade had deployed from the little wood of Auboué towards Roncourt, and the 47th was also summoned to that spot. Seven batteries hastened up from Ste. Marie and opened fire against the village. Next the 48th Brigade came up in the valley of the Orne and began to deploy against Montois-la-Montagne, but, on coming up, the village was found unoccupied and the march was continued to Roncourt, hastened on by the sight of the setting sun. By the time these forces also threatened Roncourt from the north-west, it was half-past six.



COLONEL V. ERCKERT.

(Commander of the Fusilier Guards, at St. Privat.)

Mingled with parts of the Guards, 15 battalions soon encircled the village from the north and west.

Marshal Canrobert watched the storm gathering round St. Privat. He thought it best to evacuate it, and as a preparation he ordered Péchot's Brigade of his corps to occupy the edge of the wood of Jaumont. Roncourt was abandoned, and easily taken by the Saxons. Now the whole surged on towards St. Privat. Crown Prince Albert brought forward his artillery. Soon 84 guns thundered against the north-west of the village, and shot upon shot rattled down upon its burning and smoking mass of houses. From Ste. Marie the Fusiliers of the Guards came up, and in accordance with an order from Prince Frederick Charles, the 20th Division and the artillery of the Xth Corps came from St. Ail. The general assault upon St. Privat took place at half-past seven.

The hour for the decision of the great battle had now struck. The garrison of the extensive village did indeed desperately defend itself within it, but its fate was irrevocable.

Two thousand prisoners remained with the Germans. The VIth French Corps slid down, defeated, into the valley of the Moselle.

Too late the French Grenadier Guards came up from Saulny with the artillery of the reserve. They could not turn the fate of the day. An artillery duel, only, set in as the night fell, directed against the German batteries of the Guards and of the Xth Corps, which now began to form a mighty line of fire in the conquered position of St. Privat. They had wheeled round to the right, and forming front to the south-east, had set Amanvillers on fire. In the last moments of the battle the enemy had made vigorous assaults from that quarter, probably only to cover the retreat, now believed to be inevitable. But in consequence of these, the battle was renewed with great violence by the IXth Corps as well. Wounded and stragglers returned from the front.



MARSHAL CANROBERT.

Prince Frederick Charles rode forward to the Bois-de-la-Cusse. From sections without commanders, whom he gathered by encouraging cheers, he formed a battalion and handed it over to General von Manstein. In a short conversation with him a last assault was agreed upon, destined here at Amanvillers also to effect something decisive. The IIIrd Corps received orders to advance.

But this was the moment when at sunset the French made their last attempts against the First Army. On the left wing of the VIIIth Corps the roar of battle again grew very loud; it seemed as if the enemy at Chantrenne were forcing his way in between the VIIIth Corps and the IXth. General von Alvensleben, the hero of Vionville, as cautious as he was bold, refrained from advancing, so as to be ready to ward off a last and perhaps fatal mischance. Meanwhile darkness had fully set in. Here and there indeed isolated groups of combatants made a last effort, and the

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RETURN OF THE FRENCH AFTER THE BATTLE OF GRAVELOTTE.

[page 1, 181.

3rd Brigade of the Guards even got into the position of Amanvillers, but these forces were too insignificant to deal a great blow. Gradually the battle ceased. The fiery gleam of burning villages lit up the dark night that followed upon this arduous day.

* * *

During the last moments of the fight Prince Frederick Charles had returned to his post at Habonville.

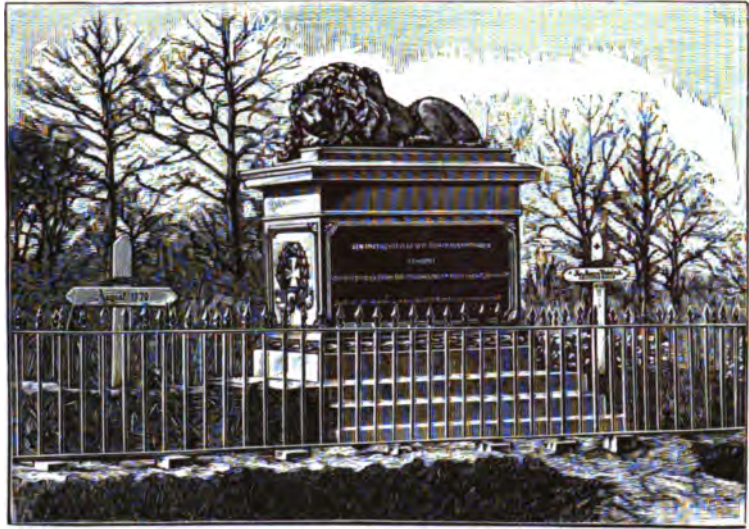
The altered front from which the artillery at St. Privat delivered its fire, afforded proof that the victory was his.

As it had grown dark he issued his orders for the night by the flames of burning sheaves of corn. The corps were ordered to encamp on the battle-field, where each happened to stand at the close of the contest, but keeping up close communication with each other, and placing strong outposts to prevent the enemy from bursting through.

The Head-Quarters for the night were at Doncourt.

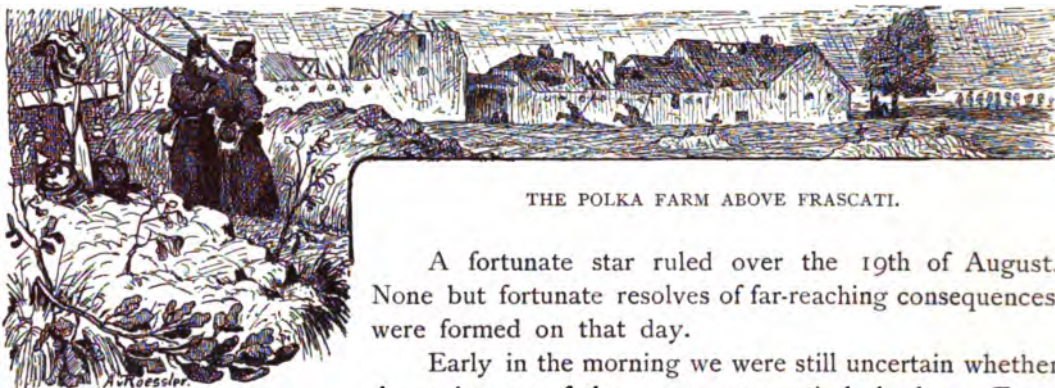
How differently the day had turned out from what had been imagined on the day before. Instead of the garnering of easy successes, it had brought a new, unexpectedly severe conflict. The extent of the line of battle, the sight of the field covered with dead and wounded at St. Privat and Amanvillers spoke eloquently enough. The losses were estimated with sufficient accuracy at 20,000 men¹ or more. Honour and glory to the brave army which, with the greatest resolution, met such a heavy task, so unexpectedly imposed on it, and mastered it!

¹ Actually the losses for the whole army amounted to 899 officers and 19,260 men.



MEMORIAL TO THE 25TH DIVISION, AT BOIS-DE-LA-CUSSE.

THE INVESTMENT AND FALL OF METZ



THE POLKA FARM ABOVE FRASCATI.

A fortunate star ruled over the 19th of August. None but fortunate resolves of far-reaching consequences were formed on that day.

Early in the morning we were still uncertain whether the resistance of the enemy was entirely broken. From Caulre-Ferme, whither Prince Frederick Charles had ridden at 5 o'clock in the morning, he issued orders to his army, that wherever the French should be met beyond the range of the forts they should be attacked and driven back. Soon, however, it was clear that they were in full retreat, having our men close upon their heels. The conflict was not renewed.

When the Prince had at Vernéville convinced himself of this, he rode over to Rezonville to the King to report and receive orders.

Important plans had meanwhile been made at the Great Head-Quarters. The victory just gained formed the starting-point for a new campaign. Never perhaps has a toilsomely won victory been utilized with such rapidity and insight. As early as the forenoon of the 19th of August Moltke submitted to the King all the orders to be issued.

Originally it had not been intended to besiege Metz; but only to observe it, whilst the army continued its march upon Paris. Now, however, an army stood within its walls—the main army of the enemy. It had to be conquered, or at least imprisoned in its place of refuge.

Prince Frederick Charles was told off for that duty, but his army was broken up. The IInd, IIIrd, IXth and Xth Corps remained with him, and also General von Steinmetz with the First Army and the 3rd Division of Reserve, which originally was to have watched the fortress and had already come up sufficiently near under General von Kummer.

The Guards, Saxons, the IVth Army Corps at that time posted before Toul, and the 5th and 6th Divisions of Cavalry moved on westwards into France. Their Commander-in-Chief was Crown-Prince Albert of Saxony, the best choice that could possibly have been made.

On the very evening of the 19th of August they set about the execution of the new orders. Wistfully the looks of those that stayed behind followed the departing army, whose lot was very preferable. They were marching into a fresh country still untouched by the war, and looking forward to an assured victory over the army of Marshal MacMahon, which, formed as it was in haste, was no match for the Germans, however brave it may be; but those that stayed behind were placed in front of the

cannon of Metz, opposed to an enemy that could not be got at, being sheltered behind the forts.

At that time nobody yet thought that time would disorganize Bazaine's troops and that hunger would conquer them. It was held that after such heavy blows, France must put an end to the war; these opinions were mooted about even at Headquarters. The war would not last many weeks more, they said, and in front of Metz one would inactively witness the end of the drama.

But what a country there was round Metz! All around were villages and farms burnt down, fields devastated, gardens trampled under foot, and to crown all, far and wide, fields of corpses. That was the view offered to the eye. Why, no less than 400,000 warriors had there on this narrow space contended with each other for six days, leaving death and destruction behind them. A glowing sun sent, on this 19th of August, pitiless rays down on these parched plains.

Possibly Prince Frederick Charles may also have felt some disappointment, and it may have recalled to his mind the time when he lay with his army before Düppel, longingly waiting to be released.

But a good soldier engages even on an uncongenial task with unwearied alacrity. The Prince had an excellent assistant in General von Stiehle, the Chief of his staff. The stately, ever equable calm and the clear insight of this highly gifted soldier, who viewed things from an elevated stand-point, were as fitted to dissipate clouds of displeasure on the brow of the Prince, as to regulate the conduct of the army in harmony with the Prince's desires.



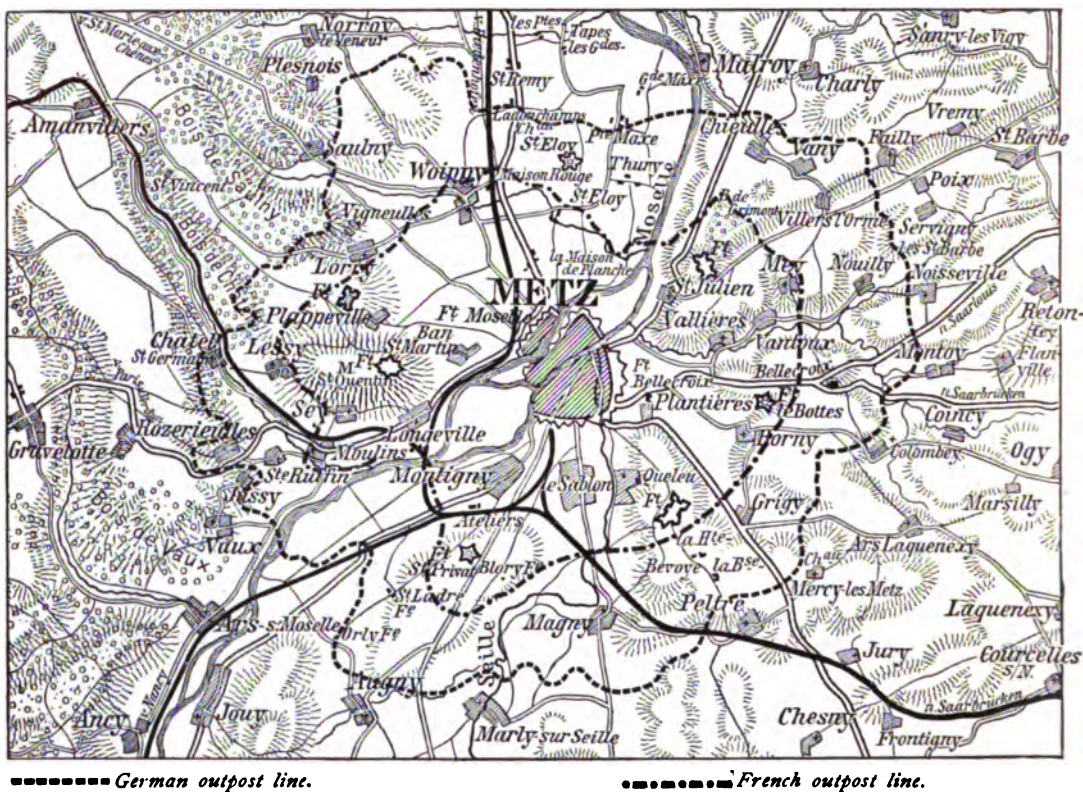
GENERAL V. STIEHLE.
(Chief of the Staff of the Second Army).

As early as half-past one in the afternoon, when the Prince was yet at Rezonville, his orders were issued to the newly formed army. Its task was principally to prevent the French from cutting their way through to the west. Only the Ist Corps and the Division of the Reserve were to remain on the right bank of the Moselle, and they were ordered, if need be, to avoid a conflict with superior forces.

Accordingly the Xth Corps was ordered to relieve the Saxons, to descend north of Metz into the valley of the Moselle, to block it and to occupy its woody slopes. Near them the IInd Corps moved into line, upon the conquered heights of St. Privat and Amanvillers, as far as down to Moscou-Ferme; then followed the VIIIth from Moscou to Jussy on the Moselle. The VIIth blocked the valley on both sides of the river. Behind the corps in observation on the west of Metz, stood the IIIrd, at Caulre-Ferme; and the IXth at Ste. Marie and Auboué, in reserve. On the opposite side, on

the east, the 1st Corps was encamped in a wide sweep extending from Faily and Servigny as far as Laquenexy. The 3rd Division of the Reserve moved into line to their right, reaching as far as the Moselle below the fortress. In the south and south-east the 3rd Cavalry Division formed the connecting link between the 1st and VIIth Corps; the 1st Cavalry Division stood at Rezonville.

The observation of the enemy had thus been turned into an investment, from which he was fated not to free himself. The King's orders had in their execution received a considerable extension. At the present day, when the fall of Metz and



BLOCKADE OF METZ.

Paris are inscribed in the pages of the history of war, the idea underlying these circumstances seems very simple and natural. It was not so then. We have since learnt to appreciate the difficulties in the way of the self-liberation of a surrounded army; but in those days it was a bold deed to encircle with a thin ring of troops a whole army concentrated in a fortress. At each individual point it was far superior to the besiegers, and accordingly the success of an attempt to break out was apparently assured wherever it should be made.

Caution¹ was added to audacity. Pick and shovel were soon at work. Con-

¹ History strangely repeats itself. The siege of Metz by the Germans has its exact counterpart in the siege of Alesia, nearly 2000 years previously, by the Romans. [Trs.]

nected lines of defence were prepared, the villages were fortified, shelter-trenches were dug across the fields, batteries entrenched, and entanglements constructed. Behind them were made roads, communications, lines of telegraph and relays, huts, magazines, hospitals and posts of observation. Everybody settled down as best he could. At the same time the weary work of burying the dead had to be got through. The hard soil, rocky in many places, was ill fitted to receive the numerous corpses of men and horses. It was a sore toil with pick-axe and spade, and the heat of the sun and the lack of water increased the suffering.

Moreover, during the early days of the investment renewed attacks and battles were hourly expected. Our scouts busily watched the enemy. By degrees we made out the tents of his camps by the forts, and understood the distribution of his forces and his internal communications. The French Guards and the Reserve of Artillery were encamped at Ban St. Martin; the IInd Corps at Longeville; the IIIrd partly at Montigny and partly at the forts of Queleu and St. Julien; the IVth at Le Sansonnet in the valley of the Moselle, north of the town; the VIth and Du Barail's Cavalry Division to the right of them, in front of Fort Moselle; Forton's Division at Chambière, an island in the Moselle. Marshal Bazaine's Head-Quarters were at Ban St. Martin.

The first line of investment was barely finished, when Prince Frederick at once began to push it forward. The enemy was to be deprived of every little spot of open ground. In the west, Châtel and Saulny were occupied, and at other points also the girdle of troops round Metz was drawn together more tightly.

Eager suspense was felt about news from the west. The army of MacMahon was on the move, and Napoleon was in Rheims. In Metz the enemy was most active on the northern side, and there were discovered traces of secret communication between the two French armies. Even ere the catastrophe of Sedan was foreshadowed, they were convinced at the Head-Quarters of Doncourt, that a plan was being formed of a combined action between MacMahon and Bazaine for their junction along the northern frontier of France, where the smaller fortresses would be of advantage to the enterprise. Silently the needful measures were taken; the IXth Corps was pushed on towards the north-east, to the edge of the valley of the Moselle.

On the 25th news came by telegraph, that Marshal MacMahon had left his camp at Châlons-sur-Marne. Of course it was not at once known what direction he had taken, but new events were brewing. Metz also was astir; troops were moved forward to the north; a greater activity was noticed on the 26th. From the elevated posts of observation on the edges of the valley of the Moselle, the panorama of Metz was seen, with its cathedral towering above the masses of houses; the works of fortification, the suburbs, camps of tents and columns of troops were clearly spread out at our feet. Not a single movement could escape our searching looks. Bazaine's army was on the march, it moved towards the north-east against the Ist Corps and the 3rd Division of the Reserve. In the investing lines also, measures of defence were immediately taken; the neighbouring troops marched up in support of the threatened spot and skirmishing began.

It was an exciting moment; it seemed to be the commencement of a fourth battle in front of Metz. Nevertheless the reports that were coming in were greeted with joy; all hoped for release from inactivity before the fortress and from the camps tainted with the scent of graves; new marches in the open field were anticipated. No less hopefully did the Commander-in-Chief look forward to the coming events. His talents

and his preparations made him long for a war of movement, not for the lying still and trial of patience incident to a siege. At half-past one in the afternoon he left Doncourt in joyous mood to ride to the post of observation at Fêves, whence the expected field of battle could be overlooked.

The sky was overcast, the day rough and windy—suitable weather for bidding good-bye to the scenes of conflagration of the battle-field. Then the dark clouds poured down heavy rain and hail; a fit reminder of the battle of the Katzbach, on the 26th of August, 1813,¹ when Blücher's star rose in splendour. In the retinue of the Prince rode an officer who had fought with the French in Mexico: "Now it is all over," said he, "in such weather they will do nothing." A universal protest! And yet he proved to be right. Soon the cavalcade met the troops returning from their



VALLEY OF THE MOSELLE, NEAR METZ.

places of assembly. The enemy had arrested his movements, pitched his tents and lighted the camp-fires. From the Horimont² all was clearly observed, there was no doubt of it, that for that day at least the repose would not be disturbed. All returned disappointed to Doncourt.

At 1 o'clock a.m. Head-Quarters were roused by important news: MacMahon had turned off to the left, and his march upon Sedan had begun. Two corps of the army of investment were to start at once so as to reach on the 28th the neighbourhood of Damvillers and Mangiennes, near the Maas, between Stenay and Verdun. Haste

¹ Where 90,000 Prussians under Blücher defeated 100,000 French under MacDonald. [*Trs.*]

² The mountain with the observatory at Fêves, near Marange.

was enjoined. Immediately orders were given, and whilst on the 27th the enemy was stirring as on the previous day, and we were informed by prisoners that as a matter of fact the whole French army had then been confronting the lines of General von Kummer, the IInd and IIIrd Corps exultingly began their westward march. In the village of Jouaville Prince Frederick Charles witnessed them march through with a heavy heart; he would gladly have accompanied them. His army before Metz was reduced to 125,000 men, and though now considerably weaker than the enemy within the fortress, it had to defend a line between 5 and 6 German miles in length (= 25 to 30 Eng. miles).

But rainy weather continued. It was the old ally of Prussia that again proved efficacious. The critical moment passed away and the French kept quiet. In the afternoon head-quarters were moved to the little village of Malancourt, situated further north and nearer the edge of the Moselle valley; this was nearer the scene where the next action was expected to take place, for there was no longer any doubt that, if Marshal Bazaine wished to free himself, it would be done down the Moselle valley, and on the right bank.

This anticipation was destined to be fulfilled. Things remained quiet for a few days, but on the 31st of August observers reported busy activity in all the French camps. As had happened five days ago, so also now long columns of troops with artillery and baggage, evidently prepared for a departure, were seen to file across from the left to the right bank of the river. At 10 o'clock in the morning General von Manteuffel telegraphed that the enemy was deploying his whole army against the Ist Corps, which had taken up its defensive positions. The battle of Noisseville began.

The Xth Corps was already on its march across to the right bank of the Moselle, to support General von Kummer; the IXth was ordered by the Prince to hold itself in readiness at the edge of the valley, by Pierrevillers and Roncourt. As the two corps that had marched away to the west had meanwhile returned, they also could be employed. The IInd was to assemble at Auboué and Briey, so as to be ready either to advance by St. Privat to the field of battle, or to march northwards to Fontay, in case Bazaine succeeded in breaking through; the IIIrd marched direct to St. Privat.

Then Prince Frederick Charles rode again to the Horimont, whence with an excellent telescope he could see the whole battle, as if a scene on the stage were being acted before him. Nearly all the positions of the investing forces could be overlooked, but nearer and even more distinctly could be seen the French camp and the columns of soldiers on the march. Thus they followed all the movements of the battle on both sides—its commencement, development, and termination—the most interesting spectacle that had perhaps ever been offered in the history of modern warfare. Many a German officer, lost in gazing at the scene, may have surprised himself silently taking an interest in the French, whom he saw on his side, as though it were his party in a game of skill.

There was no longer any doubt that all the forces in Metz were assembled ready for battle in front of the Ist Army Corps and the 3rd Division of Reserves. The camps on mount St. Quentin and on the hither side of the plateau of Plappeville had disappeared, as well as those in the valley of the Moselle. In the first line of the French army there stood the IIIrd Corps on both sides of the valley of Vallières, opposite the

villages of Montoy and Noisseville; to their left the IVth Corps, along the road to St. Barbe; and the VIth between the hamlet of Villers l'Orme and the Moselle. Behind them on the right stood the IIInd Corps as reserve, by the farm of Bellecroix; and on the left the Guards, in front of the fort of St. Julien. On the German side there stood prepared for defence: The 3rd Division of Reserve, under General von Kummer, in the line Malroy-Charly; the Ist Corps by Faily, Servigny and Retonfay. Only one of its brigades remained meanwhile at Laquenexy, awaiting the further progress of events. General von Woyna brought up the 28th Brigade of the VIIth Corps from the south, and more and more forces of the Xth Army Corps kept arriving at the rear of General von Kummer's front. General von Manteuffel had the supreme command.

The battle was begun with a light skirmish, and on the north side with a feeble cannonade, at times joined in by the heavier artillery of Fort St. Julien. At midday there ensued a pause. The soldiers cooked their food at the places of assembly, to strengthen themselves for the impending fight. Only the march across the bridges of the Moselle continued. Prince Frederick Charles had enjoined caution. The IXth Corps was ordered to cross the Moselle at Hauconcourt, and to take up a position on the other side, near Antilly, as reserve for the troops that were threatened.

The calm continued till 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Already it was believed that on this day, as on the 26th, all was over, when the battle began and at once assumed a grave character. The fort St. Julien with its heavy artillery, together with a heavy battery which Marshal Bazaine had ordered up, opened fire. At the Horimont it was soon perceived by the white clouds that the artillery of the Ist Army Corps was making a vigorous reply, and it was seen to be gaining ground. The cannonade also began with the reserve divisions, and lasted about an hour. Then the French batteries in the open field were silent, but probably only because their own troops were crossing the line of fire.

The infantry had executed its preliminary movements, and now engaged in the combat. The finer transparent smoke of the musketry fire could easily be distinguished. The enemy pressed forward, especially on the highway by the farm of Bellecroix, and in the low ground at Vallières. There was also heard from that quarter a vigorous fire of artillery, delivered by the field-batteries that had hastened up. It was evident that the assailants were gaining ground; German batteries were distinctly seen to leave Noisseville and again take up position further in rear, but whether the place was already taken, or was still defended, it was impossible to determine.

Till 6 o'clock in the evening the firing went on, spreading down the whole line. Between the villages of Faily and Servigny a long line of artillery, belonging to the Ist Army Corps, stood immovable, with steady regulated fire. It did not yield a step, and as long as it held out, the battle could not be lost.

The main reserves of the enemy stood immovably by the fort St. Julien. As yet the decisive assault had not been made, and Prince Frederick Charles expected that it would be delivered early in the morning of the 1st of September, against the left of the Ist Army Corps, because it was not in contact with any other forces, but stood *en l'air*. The Hessian Division, which had already arrived at Antilly, was therefore placed at the disposal of General von Manteuffel, so that he should be able that very evening to place them behind the threatened wing. By the early morning of the 1st of September the other troops of the IXth Corps were to follow.

But in fact the battle speedily became hotter. The musketry-fire visibly increased and the fire of the batteries grew more active. The struggle seemed to turn mainly about the village of Servigny. Further to the south a place was seen to be on fire; from the map it was supposed to be Aubigny-Château. Between Nouilly, Montoy, Noisseville and Retonfay the contest swayed to and fro. At 7 o'clock in the evening it was equally fierce along the whole front from Faily and Servigny as far as the heights south of Noisseville.

Gradually the dusk of evening set in—like a level mist, the smoke of powder rested over the battle-field, just as had happened on the 18th of August round St. Privat. Details were no longer recognisable, but the Prussian line of artillery stood unshakably firm, with the French line facing it.

Two rows of white clouds of smoke, one between Faily and Servigny, the other between Nouilly and Vany, indicated their positions. As it grew darker even the flash of musketry fire was perceived, and by the groups of fire the sites of the assaulted villages could be made out. Vivid firing also extended along the fighting-line of General von Kummer. Here and there buildings were on fire. After 9 o'clock in the evening the battle ceased. Evidently victory had declared for neither side.



GENERAL V. KUMMER.

General von Manstein received orders to hasten to the field with his whole corps. Then the Prince and his retinue rode back to Malancourt. They discussed the events, and especially what was to be expected on the morrow. They thought of Vionville. The enemy now was weaker than he had been then, having suffered severe losses in two battles; on the German side more troops could undoubtedly be collected than on August 16th, and, moreover, they now merely stood on their defensive and had only to repel attacks. All this strengthened the hope for a successful result.

But it seemed that the enemy was in earnest. After midnight a telegram arrived from the field: "The French made a night-attack on Faily, Servigny and Noisseville. East Prussian butt-ends and bayonets secured the victory. We hold our positions. Von Manteuffel."

At break of day thick mist covered the country. It was the friend of our foe, by rendering it easier to him to surprise us and break through. Since 4 o'clock in the morning the 1st Army Corps stood ready for defence, and at 6 o'clock the battle began. It was interrupted once more, and resumed at 8 o'clock. From the battle-field of the previous day violent fire of artillery and mitrailleuses sounded across to

the Horimont and to Malancourt. Gradually the mountain-tops and higher edges of the valleys rose above the mist. To the west of the forts all was empty and quiet; like yesterday, only a few tents were standing there. At any rate the French had not returned to their former encampments.

What was going on below in the valleys could not yet be made out.

At Malancourt something peculiar was noticed in the early morning hours. Faintly, but still very distinctly, so that there could be no delusion, distant artillery-thunder was heard from the west. Often it seemed that we heard whole salvos of batteries, and nobody could make out what it meant. Could it be an echo, or the report of some other battle? The Third Army and the Army of the Maas seemed to be too far away for their artillery to be heard. Perhaps—as some inclined to think—field-batteries, that had been despatched, were bombarding some small place on the northern frontier. The riddle remained unsolved; after half-past nine, the phenomenon ceased, and the sound was no longer heard. Nobody suspected that at that very hour the last and desperate struggle of the Second Empire had begun. The fact was that the thunder of artillery which early in the morning opened the battle of Sedan, was heard simultaneously with that of Noisseville. Whether it was also heard in Metz is not known, but communication with the outer world had been kept up, for at the bridge of boats at Argancy two bottles with little French flags attached, had been picked up the day before. They contained a message to the commandant of Thionville, informing him that his despatches had arrived, and he was requested to send further reports as “he must know what was going on.”

Prince Frederick Charles rode also to-day over to the Horimont; there he received a report from General von Manteuffel, “that he was engaged with greatly superior forces.” Orders were at once issued to the Xth Corps to move off to the bridges of the Moselle. A division of the IIIrd Corps, reinforced by artillery, had already been ordered to descend to Maizières-les-Metz, in the valley of the Moselle.

Soon the mist lifted, and the same panorama as on the day before presented itself to our eyes. The battle still stood in the position where it had been the night before, when darkness interrupted it. In the neighbourhood of Noisseville the struggle was specially severe. A strong force of German artillery was seen to direct its fire against that place; it had remained in French hands during the nocturnal contests and must now be retaken. There were fierce encounters also to the south, at Flanville and Coincy, where the 28th Brigade of the VIIth Corps skilfully and successfully struck in. To the north the firing spread along the whole front, past Servigny and Poix to Faily, and to the division of General von Kummer. The battle was now universal, but reserves still stood ready at Fort St. Julien. Not till they joined in was the crisis to be expected.

Judging by the extent and the energy of the firing, it seemed that the IXth Army Corps must already be engaged with the whole of the Ist. The Prince therefore called up the main body of the VIIth from the southern side of Metz, ordering the VIIIth to take its place in the line of investment. The welcome news also arrived that in the course of the day the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg would arrive east of Metz with the newly formed XIIIth Corps. Should the French succeed in breaking through in that direction they would unexpectedly encounter the heads of his columns on the march.

From the right General von Kummer led his Landwehr troops to the field, as the

Xth Corps arrived behind his lines of defence. Thus did considerable forces gradually assemble on the field of battle; on the whole about 70,000 men and 400 guns, Nevertheless the enemy still greatly outnumbered us; he had 120,000 men at his disposal, and we had to be prepared for the worst, that is to say that he would succeed in breaking through.

Prince Frederick Charles had already made a plan to meet that contingency. He would have met the Marshal with the IInd and IIIrd Corps on the spot where he would have had to cross the Moselle, and all the troops assembled on the battle-field would have clung to his skirts. It would have been an exciting battle, but it was not to come to that. Towards noon indeed the battle grew fiercer; it swayed to and fro at Rupigny, as well as on the highway between Metz and St. Barbe, and at Poix and Servigny. From the Horimont French infantry was distinctly seen to advance in several lines upon the long-contested villages, but the crisis did not last long; soon



UHLAN-VEDETTE BEFORE METZ.

the firing slackened. After half-past eleven it grew ever fainter and fainter, and at 12 o'clock it ceased entirely, before the Marshal had yet brought up his last reserves. Noisseville, which he had taken at night and had long maintained, was evacuated, and again occupied by the conquerors.

On the Horimont the further movements were attentively watched. As yet it was not quite certain that the battle was really over. The enemy was by no means short of fresh men, and a renewed attack in the afternoon or evening might well be anticipated. Prince Frederick Charles accordingly made further preparations. The whole VIIIth Corps was to move into the valley of the Moselle, south of Metz, and set free all the troops of the VIIth, for active co-operation in full strength in the new battle. A division of the IInd Corps from Auboué drew nearer to the line of investment.

But after a little time French trains of waggons were seen to wend their way

down to the military bridge of the island of Chambiére. Infantry also returned from the battle-field and formed up at Fort St. Julien. More and more the French troops clustered together. Soon the light smoke of the camp-fires curled aloft, and weapons were at rest. Marshal Bazaine had abandoned the attempt to free himself from our embrace. At the approach of evening the German troops also began to return to their former positions. The repulse of this attack had cost us about 3000 men.¹

The 2nd of September was perfectly quiet in Metz, the garrison only worked in places at preparations for defence. The line of investment had stood its first trial; if the enemy was unable on this occasion to cut his way through, he had still less prospect of success in future, for his strength must diminish. The peculiar advantage also, had become evident, that the reinforcements of the besiegers hastening up against the troops attempting to break through, must necessarily fall upon their flanks, with most telling effect. It was not a stiff iron ring that encircled our opponents, but a tenacious, unbreakable fetter, that yielded where an exit was tried, and lacing him in, clung to his flanks more and more tightly as he advanced.

Thus confidence grew in the German camp, and the only doubt was whether one would ever see the end of the resistance, would reap the fruits of the tenacious perseverance. News came in of Beaumont and Sedan. Napoleon III, MacMahon and his whole army taken prisoner! At first it was not believed; even Prince Frederick Charles entered into his memoranda: "The affair is too big to be believed." But when the news were confirmed, and admitted no further doubt, when the endless trains of prisoners arrived, then it was believed the war was over, and Bazaine was rescued, to the great grief of those who had fought on the 14th, 16th and 18th of August.

Soon the German armies marched upon Paris. The capital was invested, and a winged word then passed from mouth to mouth, that it would surrender if for a week the supply of fresh milk in the morning were stopped. What resources of its own, so great a place could dispose of, had yet to be learnt by experience.

After the disappearance of MacMahon from the scene of war, the situation of the French army at Metz was completely changed. No deliverance could be expected from breaking through towards the north, but at best only laying down of arms beyond the neighbouring frontier; rather better prospects presented themselves towards the south-east, where Strassburg still held out, and Belfort was not so much as threatened. Moreover, it was believed that the new French government would move to the south of France so as not to be threatened by the German armies close by. This circumstance also was in favour of Bazaine seeking to make his escape in that direction. Prince Frederick Charles concentrated still more troops towards the south² and transferred his Head-Quarters to the castle at Corny, in the valley of the Moselle.

Heavy days now came upon the army of investment—not days of battle, but of hardship and dangers through suffering and disease. The skies opened wide their sluices in the month of September, and whilst good drinking-water was everywhere scarce, the camps on the stiff clay soil were converted into extensive swamps. In vain the soldiers laboured to make paved ways in the slushy soil, or to lead off the waters into ditches. The frail huts of brushwood, built in a hurry, were dismantled

¹ Accurately it was 126 officers and 2850 men; the French lost 145 officers and 3379 men.

² At the same time the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg severed his connection with the army before Metz, to occupy the country between the two great German armies, and to besiege Toul.

by the wind, and means were lacking to repair them; straw for beds was scarce. Where individual bodies of men had built somewhat firmer structures, they were often driven by alarms to abandon them and to see laughing successors enter into possession. Nobody was able to make arrangements for a permanency. The burnt out villages offered little shelter, and repeatedly officers and men passed the night standing in the rain. This also washed the earth away from the mounds of corpses, it having been impossible to pile it up to any great depth on account of the rocky soil. The penetrating odour of decaying corpses of men and horses empoisoned the air. All buildings in any degree spacious had been fitted up for hospitals, and in spite of all efforts made for cleanliness, infection could not be prevented. The roads were bottomless swamps, the trains of waggons for the troops from the railway stations at Herny and Remilly no longer arrived in time, and provisioning was at times very defective. Large stores were spoiled by damp.

But the worst effect was produced by the compulsory inactivity. No wonder that diseases spread. Involuntarily one thought of the army of Senaherib before Jerusalem, when the trains from Metz were seen to unite at Pont-à-Mousson with those of the army of Paris, carrying the sick to the hospitals at home.

In these bad times Prince Frederick Charles made provisions for his troops like a father for his children. Well-considered hygienic measures were taken, but, above all things, the thoughts of the soldiers were turned away from the inevitable evils by uninterrupted toil and occupation. "Firm resolve and the conviction that the enemy is suffering even more than we, will help us to get over even these difficulties;" with these words the General encouraged his men. To his circumspect arrangements it is due, that the conquerors did not succumb to these hardships. Nevertheless there were 50,000 men in the hospitals, of whom but 20,000 were wounded. Diarrhoea, gastric fever and typhus were most prevalent; still actual epidemics were warded off. That the French were no better off was seen by their frequent changes of camping grounds. They quitted the lower-lying places and erected their rows of tents on the heights and slopes. Music, bugle calls and alarms were often heard from their quarters, as if to divert the minds of the men. Not till the last ten days of September did the weather become more propitious, and with more favourable weather, the military life became animated.

For some time a peaceable and forbearing attitude had prevailed in the front; hosts of French soldiers daily came out on the fields between the outposts to dig for potatoes, and our good-natured fellows could not bring themselves to fire at those unarmed men. "Hunger is painful," the sentries were often heard to say, as they looked on quietly at these excursions, which became ever more frequent. At last the Prince had to interfere with strict orders.

Marshal Bazaine accordingly undertook larger expeditions to secure provisions. On the 22nd of September he ordered an attack on the outposts of the 1st Corps and on the Division of Reservists; subsequently also on those of the VIIth Corps. Trains of waggons followed his troops, and they skirmished the whole afternoon for fodder, corn, potatoes and greens. The heavy guns of the fortress sang base in that concert, and the German batteries answered with shriller notes. Large gains they did not garner in, the German shells prevented the loading and returning of most of the waggons, but the struggle occupied the minds of the besieged and turned their thoughts

away from the inevitable catastrophe, On the day following, similar occurrences took place in front of General von Kummer's lines. After the failure of his grander enterprise Bazaine endeavoured with small attempts to overcome the Army of Investment. "The first thing to be done," said he in a new order to his troops, "is to worry the enemy, to act towards him as men in a bull-fight act when they annoy and weary the bull, and attack him in an unexpected manner from every point of the compass. This can be done with flying columns, which will never suffer a defeat, because they can always take refuge behind the walls of our fortified works. This kind of offensive reconnoitring will have the further advantage of making us acquainted with the strength of the enemy and with the positions he holds; they will supply us with the means to capture his provisions and even his guns. They will keep up the

activity and good humour of our troops, and cause them to forget the evils necessarily attending a state of war, and finally render it easier to maintain discipline."

It must be conceded to the French, that they exhibited great skill and audacity in this kind of petty warfare. The terrible severity of the great blows, dealt before Metz, seemed to them an unchivalrous barbarism. "Ce n'est plus une guerre, c'est une boucherie sauvage et abominable,"¹ wrote, after Vionville, a severely wounded French General to his family at home; and he gave



CHURCH IN PONT-À-MOUSSON AS A HOSPITAL.

expression to the universal sentiment in the enemy's camp. But in well-schemed expeditions against outposts, and in raids, the soldiers of the Second Empire were in their element; there the experience acquired in Africa, in Mexico and in the colonies, by the old soldiers and by the "généraux mamélouks", as even the generals of that epoch were often called in France, proved very efficacious.

On the 27th of September they succeeded in bringing off a coup of this kind in broad daylight. Secretly they repaired the line of railway between Metz and Peltre, which had been destroyed. Then while, during the forenoon, they were attacking

¹ "This is no longer war, it is savage and abominable butchery."

from Fort Queleu and Bellecroix the village and the neighbouring little castle of Mercy-le-haut, unexpectedly there came out a railway train, whence in the rear of the defenders descended a battalion of Chasseurs and several companies of Francs-tireurs and a part of the brave garrison were made prisoners after a sturdy resistance.

The Prince exhorted his troops to be attentive and active, even in this little war of outposts which was so little to their taste. There was no doubt about it that in time weariness would make itself felt. Lying quiet in front of the fortress became a severe trial. It is true it was distinctly observed that the herds of horses by the forts were diminishing, and it had been evident for some time that the French army could not think of breaking through and resuming the war, since artillery cannot be dragged over great distances by the hands of man; still nobody could guess how long the passive endurance might last. The belief in the rapid fall of Paris had gradually given way to the contrary conviction; the length of its resistance had set at naught all science and calculation. We began to think of the winter and to make ready for shivering in ice and snow outside this fortress. Arrangements were made to build barracks that could be warmed, and to procure healthy encampments and good shelter. For this purpose a bold plan was formed. Prince Frederick Charles had determined to abandon to the enemy, if need be, the country in the immediate neighbourhood of the fortress, and to move his army backwards into country not yet touched by the war. In the desolated villages Bazaine would have found no stores that would have appreciably increased his power of resistance. His fate was sealed, unless peace came, or help from without. But at a greater distance from the place the German General could at last have conceded to his much tried Army of Investment the repose of which it stood in such urgent need.

But things were not to come to such a pass. Early in the morning of the 2nd of October Marshal Bazaine undertook a surprise sortie on the north side of Metz, at Ladonchamps in the valley of the Moselle, just when General von Kummer's Division of the Reserve had moved in and relieved the Xth Corps; it was the prelude to grave events.

The French General was introducing another effort for freedom—true only half-heartedly and with half his force, but still strong enough to be capable of becoming serious, if the first attempt were to succeed. In the afternoon of the 7th of October Prince Frederick Charles was informed by independent telegrams from the north, that the line of investment was being attacked on both sides of the Moselle. Immediately he hurried with his staff to the nearest post of observation, on Mt. St. Blaise, to give the needful orders.

Considerable French forces had been set in motion. At first the Marshal had intended forcibly to break through the German lines and leave in Metz only a part of his troops. Everything was ready for his departure; but then his heart failed him. Possibly he was racked by the doubt, whether it was better to stake the fate of his weakened army on a general engagement, or to await within the safe protection of his walls the fall of Paris and the arrival of peace. Only the Division of the Voltigeurs of the Guards and the VIth Army Corps pushed forward in the valley of the Moselle. Further west, in the wood of Woippy, the IVth Corps stood in readiness; and on the other side, on the right bank of the Moselle, the IIIrd Corps was to support the manoeuvre. Reserves were drawn up behind the column of attack. Carts followed the troops to carry off the provisions which they hoped to seize.

The first attack was made with great impetuosity. The fortified farms of Les Tapes, situated in the line of outposts, which were defended by the Landwehr men of General von Kummer till their ammunition was spent, were lost, and a part of the garrison fell into the hands of the enemy. The farms at Bellevue were burnt and evacuated voluntarily by the German outposts.

Thus the battle raged along the full breadth of the valley of the Moselle, and the assailants gained ground rapidly. But soon the flood was stemmed by the dyke which the German artillery opposed to it. The batteries of the 3rd Division of Reserves and some from the Xth Corps began to pour from Semécourt, Maizières and Amelange well-aimed shots upon the French battalions that were pressing on, and upon their artillery in position at Ladonchamps. A battery of large calibre gave its support from the hill of Semécourt, where it had been placed in the line of investment, and soon the struggle was very unequal. After a combat lasting three-quarters of an hour the French guns were silent, and those of the Germans now directed their fire against the places that had been lost and where the conquerors were hard at work carrying off the corn they had found. Then we also heard loud noise of battle from the right of our line, from the edge of the valley of the Moselle. The neighbouring 9th Brigade of Infantry of the IIIrd Corps, under the command of Colonel von Conta, joined in the fight and victoriously it traversed the wood of Woippy. Somewhat later there came also help from the other wing. The 38th Brigade of Infantry,—the same which on the 16th of August had suffered such heavy loss in its heroic attack on Greyère-Ferme,—had been sent over by General von Voigts-Rhetz to the left bank of the Moselle. General von Kummer placed his regular troops in the first line, and having combined with them the Landwehr-men who had been repulsed at first, he once more advanced with all these forces along the whole front. Between 5 and 6 o'clock all the positions that had been lost were again in German hands. Only the castle of Ladonchamps, after which the French name this day's fight, they retained permanently and garrisoned it strongly. On the right bank the lines of the Xth and Ist Corps did indeed open fire, but they nowhere became seriously engaged. Towards the evening all was silent on both sides.

Prince Frederick Charles had taken his measures to meet all eventualities. From both sides considerable forces had, towards evening, been concentrated on the battlefield, but the enemy abandoned all further attempts; he had not even made use of his reserves.¹ True, the battle had been fiercer than all the engagements since Noisseville; but, in spite of the weight of the first assault, the besiegers soon discovered that it was no longer a question of fighting decisive battles. A few additional preparations for defence were made in anticipation of the next day, but everything remained quiet. The battle of Bellevue had been the beginning of the end, which was now steadily approaching.

After the 15th of October deserters arrived at our outposts in ever increasing numbers; they were turned back, but came again. Their reports could, of course, not be wholly believed, but still it could no longer be doubted that the army inside Metz were in a bad plight.

¹ The losses in the action of Bellevue were not inconsiderable. They amounted on the German side to 75 officers and 1703 men, among them, however, were 3 officers and 521 men missing, probably mostly prisoners. The French say that they lost 64 officers and 1193 men.

The success of the potato-diggers in the fields evidently became less and less, so that now it was hardly worth the danger and the trouble to look for them. The troops of horses too, gradually dwindled away. The fields had been cropped bare, and the animals could be distinctly seen pursuing each other, to tear from each other's bodies hairs from tail and mane. The number of inhabitants and French soldiers begging for admittance into the German lines increased day by day. Distress and despair were expressed in all the intercepted newspapers and letters, notwithstanding the frequent repetition of the words: 'courage donc et patience.' The flashing of signal messages to the fortress of Thion-



SURRENDER OF METZ.
(By permission of the Photographic Society of Berlin.)

ville, which had also now been invested for some time, became more frequent; an unmistakable sign of distress. Metz resembled a sinking ship, whose crew was mechanically working at the pumps, without deceiving themselves about the hopelessness of their efforts. "It seems that the decisive days for the army of Metz are approaching;"



these words were the preamble of the orders of Prince Frederick Charles for the 16th of October, and he enjoined caution against a last and desperate attempt of the besieged.

General Boyer had been sent by Marshal Bazaine to the Royal Head-Quarters at Versailles, there to negotiate; but he returned having effected nothing. Then at last, on the 25th of October, the grey-headed General Changarnier arrived at Cornay to

offer that the army should lay down their arms; this brave veteran, who had earned his laurels at Constantine in Algiers, voluntarily shared its fate. In vain he tried to save at least the fortress—in vain its commandant, General Coffinières de Nordeck, requested that its fate should be considered separately from that of the army. All eloquence failed to shake the firmness of the conqueror. Both fortress and army had to be surrendered together.

Once more, on October 26th, all Metz stood under arms, but not a shot was to be fired; the French eagle had drooped its wings. On the 27th of October, at 10 o'clock in the evening, the protocol of the capitulation was signed. Bazaine's Army and Metz were handed over to the Germans. Three Marshals, 6000 officers and 173,000¹ men were made prisoners. In addition the conquerors took 56 eagles, 622 pieces of field- and 876 of garrison-artillery, 72 mitrailleuses, 137,420 chassepots and 123,326 other small arms, besides an immense quantity of war material.

A success had been gained that was beyond all parallel; never yet had so large an army laid down its arms. On the 29th of October it left the dungeon in which it had held out so long and so steadfastly; it was received by its conquerors with respect and sent on to Germany. The sorrows and hardships they had endured were clearly seen in the forsaken camps. The buildings were mostly destroyed, the gardens and plantations swept away, fences and hedges had vanished. Of vegetation there was not a trace left. The starving horses had gnawed off everything, even the bark of the trees. Many of these animals were seen in piteous condition between the houses and the walls, motionless awaiting death by hunger; half broken down, some sat on their haunches, others licked the slime at their feet, and many had sunk down in harness by the carts. The ground of the camps formed extensive swamps, in which men, horses and carts sank ankle deep. This mud had served as a bed of rest for some time to officers and men; of straw not a trace was to be discovered. Scarcely to be distinguished from the universal grey of the soil, carcasses of horses lay in the morass. Also corpses of soldiers were found. These unfortunate men probably had died just before the surrender, and nobody had thought of burying them. It was a hell on earth that these brave defenders had quitted. Indeed one could not but respect an enemy who, under such circumstances, had held out so long.

Neither were they slight hardships which the conquerors had endured during the ten long weeks of the investment; they lost in front of Metz 240 officers and 5500 men; numerous victims had fallen by disease; but a victory of unheard of magnitude was gained. Full of renewed courage, of pride at their achievement and of confidence in the future, these armies now started, some to the north of France, some to the Loire, ready for further action.

The drama of Metz was concluded. It had begun² on the 14th of August, when Marshal Bazaine resolved once more to make front against the pursuing Germans. The plot thickened on the 16th of August, when General von Alvensleben, by his

¹ This number included 20,000 sick. The German Army then consisted of 4050 officers 167,338 men and 642 guns.

² It properly began in 1552, when, by an act of unpardonable treachery, the Duc de Montmorency got possession of the fortress, which now reverted back to its owners after a lapse of more than three centuries, during all which time the French used it as a sally-port in their frequent aggressions against the Germans. [*Trs.*]

bold attack, arrested the westward march which Bazaine had resumed. Finally, on the 18th of August, came the solution. After that the only things needful to fulfil the fate of the place were the iron resolve of the German Commander and the unqualified and trustful devotion of the investing army.

The victorious Prince was rewarded with the Marshal's bâton, and the army found its reward in the consciousness of having carried out and manfully brought to a glorious issue the orders of their General.

With regard to the battle of Gravelotte, General von Verdy du Vernois narrates in the July number, 1895, of the "*Deutsche Rundschau*", the following interesting personal reminiscences. He records that Steinmetz sent to Head-Quarters the incorrect reports that the heights in front of him had been taken, and that he had sent the cavalry in pursuit. Thereupon the King and his Head-Quarters left their post on an elevated spot near Vionville, north of Flavigny, and betook themselves to a standpoint east of Rezonville; but as this did not offer a sufficiently extensive view, they moved still further forward to a position north-west of Gravelotte. Here the Head-Quarters were situated immediately behind the deployed artillery of the VIIIth Corps, and accordingly in close proximity to the fighting-line; this must be regarded as unsuitable, because the general view is disturbed by the keen interest taken in the events immediately under the spectator's eyes. It was necessary continually to send off officers to bring news about the progress of the battle at the centre and at the left wing. Count Wartensleben, Steinmetz's Deputy-Quartermaster-General, reported that our men were falling back, that it was true that the heights had been taken, that they had been lost again, our men having been driven back by a strong counter-attack. Shortly after Steinmetz arrived with his staff, and the King declared that, if the heights had been taken and lost again, every effort must be made to recover them. Steinmetz rode back in the direction of Gravelotte to give further orders.

Gradually the contest assumed a comparatively quiet aspect; a new general attack by the infantry was being prepared, and when it was made, the picture at once changed. "Suddenly the opposite slopes flashed into light, as though it were an illumination on a large scale; innumerable tiny flames darted forth from the several levels and clear blue clouds rested over them; up on the ridge, and down in the valley, everywhere the noise burst forth afresh. The French batteries again appeared on the scene, as though they had sprung out of the ground. Shrapnels, shells, and shot from the mitrailleuses roared from the hill in wild turmoil. Even where we stood the whistling of the bullets was heard, as well as the bursting of a few shrapnels high over our heads. The whole offered one of the most animated and beautiful battle-scenes conceivable."

Suddenly there were seen in the cutting below Gravelotte "individuals, and then greater numbers, in hasty retrograde movement; ever quicker and quicker the crowd rolled on, and finally they were in full run; among them individual horsemen tore along, as well as vehicles of various sorts. Then the impression was conveyed that artillery was also in full retreat, and the movement was becoming more general and extending right up to us. We witnessed a perfect panic. First the King had to be conducted away in safety, and the fugitives be brought to halt again. Everybody jumped on his horse. After it had been settled what road His Majesty was to ride back, Moltke returned with us and again rode on in the direction of Gravelotte; we now gained the impression that the infantry was already engaged in the immediate neighbourhood of the village, but before we were able to come up to it, the movement had already been arrested. Moltke rode with us at walking pace in front of the cavalry division that had wheeled up; this being done under the fire of shells did not fail of its effect."

The whole was due to the fact "that the led-horses of some Staff had torn themselves loose and were galloping back along the highway. Then the numerous wounded and those accompanying them, as also stragglers, believed that the enemy was close upon them, and tried hard to effect their escape. A column of ammunition meeting them wished to get out of the way of the mob, and turned aside at a trot. The whole mass of non-combatants and wounded hastily streaming back, had at last produced the impression of a panic. But not one formed body of troops, not

one group of skirmishers had retreated. On the slope above, the thinned battalions of the VIIIth Corps had repulsed the attack." "It was about 8 o'clock, and nearly pitch-dark in consequence of the smoke hovering over the low-lying places, when we rode back to Gravelotte." The IIInd Corps now advanced. The men had been marching ever since 2 o'clock, "amidst bursting shells the firmly closed columns moved through the village, in proud bearing and with loud shouts of joy, that they, the Pommeranians, were finding work to do. In such moments one feels that death on the battle-field is surrounded by a halo of great brilliancy."

Everything seeming to go well, it was useless for General von Moltke to be still exposing himself to danger. His attention was drawn to it, but still he remained for some time longer on the highway, and only returned later on. On the way he was met by Count Lehndorff, A. D. C. to the King, who informed him that His Majesty was at Rezonville, awaiting his report about the state of the battle. At the western extremity of Rezonville, south of and close by the highway, the King had sat down by a fire near a barn that was burnt down. As the Staff arrived, one of the higher officers was just saying to the King: "But now, Your Majesty, after our heavy losses of to-day, it is my humble opinion that the attack should not be continued on the morrow, but that we should await the attack of the French." Whereupon Verdy exclaimed: "Then I don't know why on earth we have been attacking to-day," and Moltke, in his calm and resolute manner, declared: "Your Majesty has now only to give orders to continue the attack, if the enemy should to-morrow be posted outside Metz." Orders to that effect were issued forthwith. It was now nearly 10 o'clock, and Bismarck wrote down the King's despatch to Berlin, and then it was determined to pass the night in Rezonville.



CHAPTER VII

THE ARMY OF THE MAAS AND SEDAN

By **LIEUTENANT-COLONEL MORITZ EXNER**
Curator of the Royal Saxon Archives of War.

FORMATION AND TASK OF THE ARMY OF THE MAAS

WITH the complete retreat of the army of Marshal Bazaine at noon on the 19th of August under the cannons of Metz a decisive change had set in in the general situation of the war. Nothing, but forcibly bursting through the German lines would again enable these troops to coöperate independently in the defence of the country. It was the primary duty of the German army outside Metz to prevent anything of the kind. But a smaller force than was at the moment assembled there was sufficient to discharge this duty; therefore, His Majesty, the King, commanded that the forces outside Metz, whose services could be dispensed with, should, with the Third Army, march in the direction of Châlons, to oppose the hostile forces there concentrating. Whilst the First Army, the 3rd Division of the Reserve, the IInd, IIIrd, IXth and Xth Army Corps were ordered to remain before Metz under the command of Prince Frederick Charles, the Army Corps of the Guards, and the IVth and XIIth (Royal Saxon) Army Corps, as well as the 5th and 6th Cavalry Divisions should be placed under the command of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince Albert of Saxony, till circumstances should make it possible to revert to the original distribution of the forces. The subsequent events of the campaign made this impossible, and the "Army Section of the Crown Prince of Saxony", which afterwards was commonly designated as the IVth Army, or the Army of the Maas, retained its organisation till the conclusion of the armistice at the end of the war.

The Staff of the newly organized Army Section was appointed on the 22nd of August at Jeandelize; the Prussian Major-General, Baron von Schlotheim, hitherto Commander of the 25th Cavalry Brigade, was appointed Chief of the Staff. The command of the XIIth Corps was taken over by H. R. H. Prince George of Saxony, hitherto commander of the 23rd Infantry Division. The two Cavalry Divisions were at the end of August incorporated with the Third Army.

The pontoon-columns and the greater part of the respective pioneer battalions of the Guards and of the XIIth Army Corps were allotted to the Army of Investment before Metz, so that for the present only one company of pioneers could accompany of the above-named corps on their march to the west.

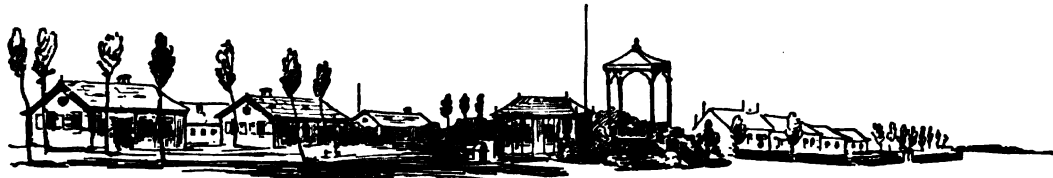
The marching out strength of the above-enumerated parts of the army, which, with the exception of the IVth Army Corps, had suffered considerable losses in the battles before Metz on the 16th and 18th of August, amounted on the 22nd of August to the following:

Army Corps of the Guards,	20,027	men,	4215	horses	and	96	guns;
IV th Corps	24,916	"	2157	"	"	84	"
XII th "	25,085	"	3570	"	"	96	"
5 th Cavalry Division			4147	"	"	12	"
6 th "			2558	"	"	6	"

The total of this Army Section in its first composition accordingly numbered: 83 battalions, 116 squadrons, 48 batteries, with 70,028 men, 16,247 horses and 288 guns.

Of the newly formed Army Section there stood on August 20th, fronting west, the Corps of Guards, at Hanonville and Mars-la-Tour, the XIIth at Conflans and Jarny, the 5th Division of Cavalry at Briey, the 6th at Ville-sur-Yron, and the IVth Army Corps at Commercy. The main forces were accordingly united on both banks of the Orne, and at the Yron.

THE ARMY AT CHÂLONS



From a sketch by C. Freyberg, 27th August, 1870.

Of the VIIth Army Corps, only one infantry division, under the command of General Conseil-Dumesnil, had been involved in the defeat at Wörth, whilst the other parts of it, after aimlessly marching to and fro, had assembled on the 11th of August at Belfort. The Vth Army Corps was to have marched primarily upon Nancy, but by order of Marshal Le Boeuf, Adjutant-General of the army, it was set in motion first in the direction of Langres, and then of Toul. But within a few days General de Failly was instructed to depart for Paris; arrived at Chaumont on the 17th of August, he had to march to the camp at Châlons, where the 1st Army Corps was in the act of assembling. All the troops of the army not belonging to the Army of the Rhine were to concentrate there.

After Marshal MacMahon had on his retreat with the 1st Army Corps first turned aside in a southerly direction and reached the valley of the Upper Marne, the infantry was, on and after the 16th of August, conveyed by rail from Manois station¹ to the camp at Châlons. Mounted troops were ordered to march.

The conveyance by rail was carried out between the evening of the 14th and the 17th. For its protection, portions of the Vth Army Corps had been posted west of the line St. Dizier—Blesme, and this last corps itself was carried by rail to Châlons, but their entrainment was greatly delayed by want of rolling-stock and platforms, so that the reserve-artillery of the corps had to entrain at Bar-sur-Aube and make a detour via Paris to be brought to the camp.

The divisions of the VIIth Corps at Belfort were also to be taken by train from Belfort to Châlons and Reims. But they had to pass via Paris, because the direct line through Blesme was no longer held to be safe, German cavalry patrols having already made their appearance there. The journey took nearly three days, and on the way numerous acts of insubordination were committed by the troops, who suffered much from defective commissariat arrangements. But the regulations about these transports, their utilisation and protection, were made with such circumspection that

¹ A small station on the line between Neuf Château and Chaumont, it is distant over 30 miles S.S.E. from St. Dizier. [*Trs.*]

the performance of the French lines of railway in those days must be characterised as preëminently great.

On the 21st of August the three corps above named stood united between Châlons and Reims.



CENTGARDES, NAPOLEON'S
BODY-GUARD.

Meanwhile there had also been formed a new corps, the XIIth, in the camp of Châlons. It was put under the command of General Trochu, who, in his capacity of military attaché to the French embassy in Berlin, had reported intelligently about the state of the Prussian military affairs, and was reputed in the French army as being intimately acquainted with them. But before operations commenced, General Lebrun, hitherto Sous-chef of the General Staff at the Head-Quarters of the Emperor Napoleon, assumed the command of this corps. General Trochu was appointed Governor of Paris, as insurrectionary outbreaks were apprehended there, and justly too, as the future proved. Twelve battalions of Gardes Mobiles, who were to have been incorporated with the XIIth Corps and had arrived between the 30th of July and the 11th of August, had to be sent back again to Paris, in consequence of their bad behaviour and want of discipline.

The XIIth Army Corps consisted of 39 battalions of infantry, 1 battalion of chasseurs, 24 squadrons, 28 batteries and 5 companies of engineers. It had been formed of 4 regiments of marines,—excellent troops, whose marching capacity, however, fell short of what was expected of them; of two newly formed marching regiments; of parts of the VIth Army Corps, who had failed to come up with it in the march upon Metz; and of the 4 regiments of infantry, 1½ regiments of mounted rifles and 6 batteries of the regiment of marine artillery that had till now been left to watch the Spanish frontier.

Marshal MacMahon was Commander-in-Chief of the forces assembled at Châlons, known as the "Army of Châlons". There were also added to it the 2nd Cavalry Division (De Bonnemaïns), and Margueritte's Cavalry Division; the latter consisting of two regiments of Chasseurs d'Afrique, who had come to Châlons from Metz as escort to the Imperial Head Quarters; of a similar regiment, called over expressly from Africa, and of Tillard's brigade, originally forming the 1st Brigade of the Cavalry Division of the VIth Army Corps.

The total strength of the Army of Châlons consisted on the 25th of August of the following troops: Ist Army Corps (Ducrot), 56 battalions, 24 squadrons, 20 batteries (96 guns, 24 mitrailleuses); Vth Army Corps (Faily), 32 battalions, 16 squadrons, 15 batteries, (72 guns, 18 mitrailleuses); VIIth Army Corps (Douay), 38 battalions, 12 squadrons, 15 batteries (72 guns, 18 mitrailleuses); XIIth Army Corps (Lebrun), 40 battalions, 28 squadrons, 28 batteries (150 guns, 18 mitrailleuses); Reserve of Cavalry, 36 squadrons, 3 batteries (12 guns, 6 mitrailleuses): Total 166 battalions, 112 squadrons, 81 batteries (402 guns, 84 mitrailleuses.) Besides this there were at the Imperial

Head Quarters, 1 battalion of Grenadier Guards and 1 squadron of Guides of the Imperial Guard. In its totality the army numbered 133,600 Infantry, 16,450 Horse, and 486 Guns. Further strength was derived from the XIIIth Army Corps organised in Paris and placed under the command of General Vinoy. This corps, however, only reached Mézières and Reims, each with one division, on August 30, and only isolated sections could take part in the decisive battle at Sedan by operating against the rear of the German positions, albeit quite ineffectually. The Emperor Napoleon joined its Head Quarters, he having left the Army of the Rhine and gone to Châlons. Political reasons made his return to Paris impracticable.

Even the French reports about the state of the army at Châlons were unfavourable: The Ist Army Corps had suffered heavy losses in the defeats of Weissenburg and Wörth, and was still much shaken by them; the morale of the Vth and VIth Army Corps, of which parts only had been engaged, had been affected by the continuous marchings to and fro, and by the short-comings of the commissariat. Only the newly organized XIIth Corps was still unaffected.

Shortly after MacMahon's arrival in camp, a council of war was held, at which the Emperor Napoleon, Prince Napoleon and several Generals were present. It was determined that the Marshal should take the chief command, Trochu should be Governor of Paris, and that the whole army should be taken back to the Capital. Shortly after these resolves had been formed there arrived a despatch from General Palikao, the War Minister in Paris, demanding, in the name of the Empress, a march upon Metz. Meanwhile news had also arrived at Châlons from Marshal Bazaine about the result of the battle of Vionville on the 16th of August; the Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Rhine expressed his intention of continuing his march to the west, after he had supplied himself with provisions and ammunition. A retreat upon Paris would make a junction with Bazaine impossible, and on this junction a new despatch of the War Minister insisted.

At the same time news arrived at Head-Quarters in Châlons, that the Third Army of the Germans, which had taken no part in the battles before Metz was advancing upon Paris, and that its heads had already reached Vitry. Under these circumstances the French commanders found it very hard to arrive at a conclusion. MacMahon decided to turn aside in a north-easterly direction.

On the 21st of August the army moved from Châlons to Reims; on the same day the Minister Rouher arrived and definitely required MacMahon to hasten to the assistance of the Army of the Rhine. But the Commander-in-Chief declared that on the 23rd of August he would begin his march upon Paris as the position of the German Army, which was known to him, was such as to inevitably bring a catastrophe upon the Army of Châlons, if it should advance any further, "unless by that time he had received fresh instructions from Marshal Bazaine." The orders for the march upon Paris had already been issued, when a despatch from Bazaine arrived on the 22nd of August, at 10 a.m., saying: "The Marshal still hoped to cut his way through in the direction of Montmédy — St. Menehould to Châlons. Should he there encounter superior forces of the enemy, he would turn aside upon Sedan and even Mézières."

It was assumed now at the Head-Quarters of the Army of Châlons, that the Army of the Rhine had already begun its march, and they therefore resolved, instead of falling back upon Paris, to move forward to Stenay to meet the Army of the

Rhine. On the 23rd of August this march was begun, and on the 24th the left wing arrived in the neighbourhood of Rethel; the right wing, the VIIth Army Corps, south-west of Vouziers, whilst the 1st Division of Cavalry covered the right flank. The distance of 11 leagues (= about 27 Engl. miles) from Reims to Rethel took two days. But the road past Rethel had to be taken and a halt had to be made there, as the troops had to be supplied with provisions.

On the 25th of August only a slight advance was made; the left wing still remained at Rethel, and on that day the army stood along the Aisne between Vouziers and Rethel. The 1st Cavalry Division was placed before the front, and the 2nd was retained behind the left wing. But it was the right flank of the army on the march that was threatened, and it was there that the chief mass of the cavalry ought to have been posted.



COUNT DE PALIKAO.
(French War Minister.)

On the 26th of August the army wheeled to the right; the VIIth Army Corps formed the pivot at Vouziers, and was also held responsible for the security of the right flank. One brigade was despatched to occupy Grand-Pré, but was speedily withdrawn, German cavalry having been met there. When the German cavalry had left Grand-Pré, the brigade again took possession of it, and in the evening it returned to Vouziers, the VIIth Army Corps having meanwhile been in position awaiting an attack to the north of this place.

Upon receiving the report that Grand-Pré had been taken possession of, Marshal MacMahon determined to order the 1st Army Corps to advance upon Vouziers, in support of the VIIth; and the Vth, followed by the XIIth, to advance upon Buzancy. But when, even on the 27th, the expected attack did not take place, the troops, who were suffering from the unpropitious weather, were recalled. The VIIth

Army Corps remained at Vouziers, whilst the head of the Vth got involved in a fight with Saxon cavalry at Buzancy.

The events of the 27th of August caused the loss of another day in the forward march. The French Commander-in-Chief was well aware of the danger incurred by advancing further in the direction of Montmédy, that his retreat upon Paris might be cut off, and he might be attacked both in front and flank. He therefore resolved, as the junction with the Army of the Rhine seemed impossible, and he was also without any news from it, to turn aside upon Mézières. Already orders to that effect were issued, when the Marshal, who had informed the Paris government of his intention, received a despatch from them, ordering him to continue his advance to the east. They said (according to Bonie): "The Regency and the Council of Ministers entreat you unconditionally to effect your junction with Bazaine's army, else there will be a revolution in Paris." Again the Marshal altered his plans, and once more took his original direction upon Montmédy.

Owing to crossings on the march and to the wretched, sodden state of roads, which was a serious obstacle to the rapid advance of the troops, the Army of Châlons was able, on the 28th of August, to move forward only 1 to 1½ miles (= 5 to 7 Engl. miles). The Emperor Napoleon repeatedly warned the Marshal, that he alone must be responsible for the subsequent operations, which he himself did not approve of. As a matter of fact the French had to encounter not 100,000 men, as was erroneously reported from Paris, but the combined Third and Fourth Armies under the command of King William, who had abandoned the march upon Paris, and had turned north in forced marches.

But the movement upon Stenay also was not carried out, because on the evening of the 28th of August, news had arrived at the French head-quarters, that the bridge



SUBURB OF SEDAN (AFTER AN OIL-PAINTING BY BRACHT).

over the Maas there was demolished, and strange to say, the army was not supplied with materials for building a bridge. At last it was determined to turn aside towards the north, to cross the Maas at Remilly and Mouzon and to endeavour to open a way *viâ* Carignan to Metz.

Only the corps on the left wing, the Ist and the XIIth were able on the 29th of August, to execute these orders; the VIIth could not reach its destination, La Bésace, and the Vth not having received the altered orders, continued its advance upon Stenay. The officer who was to have delivered this order, was captured on the way. Moreover, General de Failly got involved at Nouart in a serious engagement with the Saxon advanced-guard.

The crossing of the Maas and the continuation of the march upon Montmédy was ordered for the 30th of August. The two leading divisions of the Ist Army Corps were to reach Carignan, where the XIIth Corps was standing already, and the VIIth and the Vth Corps were to gain the right bank of the Maas at Villers and Mouzon.

The VIIth Corps, which was marching from Oches to Stonne, and with its trains occupied on the road a length of 15 kilometers (=nearly 10 Engl. miles) was incessantly harassed and disquieted by German squadrons, who had since the day before been following its movements. Seven battalions had to cover the flank exposed to the enemy. Spite of the heavy cannonade, which pointed to the conclusion that the Vth Corps was seriously engaged, General Douay, fearing that he might fail to reach his appointed destination, continued his march upon Mouzon, crossing the Maas at Sedan and Remilly.

The Vth Corps had arrived early in the morning of the 30th of August at Beaumont. It was desired to give the troops some rest before starting for Mouzon, and the march was put off till noon. The simplest and most necessary precautions were neglected, for only thus was it possible that the IVth Prussian Corps was able to open the battle, which began at half-past one, with a most successful surprise. The Vth French Corps, completely overthrown, involved in its defeat parts of the VIIth Corps also, and consequently the Marshal was forced to lead the army back to Sedan. In the course of the 31st of August the French forces were concentrated in the neighbourhood of this fortress. On the same day Napoleon issued to the Army of Châlons the following Order of the Day:

“SOLDIERS!

“The beginning of the Campaign has not been fortunate for us, and therefore, putting aside all personal considerations, I entrusted the command of our armies to those Marshals whom Public Opinion specially designated. So far success has not crowned their efforts; I am informed, however, that the army of Marshal Bazaine has re-formed under the walls of Metz, and that the army of Marshal MacMahon suffered but slightly yesterday. Accordingly there is no occasion to lose heart. We have prevented the enemy from advancing upon the capital, and all France is rising to expel the invader. Under such grave circumstances, I, being confident in the Empress who worthily represents me in Paris, have preferred the part of a soldier to that of a Ruler. No sacrifice will seem to me too great for the safety of our country. France, thank God! still holds brave hearts, and—if there are cowards amongst us—the laws of war and public opinion will deal with them. Soldiers! Be worthy of our ancient repute! Let every one do his duty and God will not forsake our country.

“Given in the Imperial Head-Quarters, Sedan, August 31st, 1870.

“NAPOLEON.”

In the course of August the 31st the Vth and VIIth Corps arrived in the districts north of the fortress, the Ist holding, up to the hour of midday, the line of the Chiers from Douzy to Carignan, whilst the XIIth took up a position on the heights north of Bazeilles, La Moncelle and Balan. General Douay announced the approach of hostile forces on both sides of the canal of the Ardennes; ¹ he drew up his corps on the plateau between Floing and the Calvaire d'Illy, but still the bridges over the Maas were destroyed only at Frenois and Flize, the important bridges at Donchéry and Bazeilles remaining intact. A company of engineers from Sedan was ordered to blow up the former, and they made use of a railway train going to Mézières. But when

¹ The canal des Ardennes joins the Maas, at a point between Donchéry and Flize, with the Aisne, at a point about 10 miles north of Vouziers. [*Trs.*]

the company had got out, the train immediately went on and carried off their tools and gunpowder. Nor could the bridge at Bazeilles be blown up, because Bavarian Jägers had meanwhile taken possession of it.

Only the XIIth Army Corps was, in its retrograde movement, involved in an engagement with the 1st Bavarian Corps; detached bodies had more distant encounters with the enemy at Douzy, Flize and Frénois.

The history of the events of the last week of the month of August undoubtedly shows that the gravity of the situation, and the extent of the impending danger, had not been realized at the French head-quarters. After the army had been cut off from the direct road to Metz, it seemed impossible to effect a junction with the army of Bazaine. Three times MacMahon had resolved to lead his troops back to the capital, but under the continuous pressure of orders from Paris the eastward march was every time resumed, till the battle of Beaumont necessitated the retreat upon the fortress of Sedan. On the 31st of August it was still hoped that the army might be led back to Mézières, and that it would be possible to use the road on the right bank of the Maas via Vrigne-aux-Bois. It was erroneously assumed that the Germans were ignorant of the existence of this newly made road; as a matter of fact it was already marked on the maps issued to the German troops.

In the Council of War held at Sedan during the afternoon of the 31st of August, the retreat upon Mézières was not resolved upon. It can now be seen that this would have been their only chance of escape from the already imminent danger of being surrounded by superior forces; they would thus have saved at least a part of the army.

In the course of the 31st of August one more division of the newly formed XIIIth Army Corps arrived at Mézières. It consisted of a brigade of the line, up till then left in the Papal States at Cività Vecchia, of 30 fourth battalions of regiments of the line combined into marching regiments, 8 squadrons and 15 batteries. General Vinoy, who commanded this Corps, was directed to concentrate his troops at Mézières.—On the same day General Baron v. Wimpffen, who till now had been employed in Algeria, and in spite of his efforts had not obtained a higher command in the Field Army, took over command of the Vth Army Corps from General de Failly, who retired. General von Wimpffen in his report to the War Minister mentions as causes of the defeat at Sedan: "The exhaustion of the troops and their want of discipline, defects in the organisation of the army, lack of information about the enemy and of useful maps, the men's indifferent marching capacity and the heavy loads they had to carry, the great number of columns¹ and of vehicles, and the inefficiency of cavalry in their duties of information and protection."

ADVANCE OF THE THIRD ARMY AND THE ARMY OF THE MAAS FROM THE 20TH TO THE 25TH OF AUGUST—OPERATIONS AGAINST TOUL AND VERDUN.

From reports received at Head-Quarters it was known as a certainty that considerable forces of the enemy were being collected at Châlons, and that MacMahon had also gone there with his corps. On the 19th of August the Third Army was ordered, provisionally, to halt at the Maas. Its leading corps had already reached the line of the Ornain between Tréveray and Gondrecourt.

¹ General von Wimpffen in his book 'Sedan', published in 1871, speaks of "l'éparpillement non seulement des corps, mais des divisions, même des brigades." op. cit. p. 74. [*Trs.*]

After the troops of the Army of the Maas, coming from the neighbourhood of Metz, had come in line with those of the Third Army, there stood on the evening of the 22nd of August, on a front extending nearly 11 miles (= upwards of 50 Engl. miles) and facing west, eight and a half army corps and 6 divisions of cavalry, ready to march upon Paris. On the right wing, east of the Maas, stood the Corps of the Guards and the XIIth Corps with the divisions of cavalry assigned to the Army of the Maas; in the centre, at Commercy, stood the IVth Corps, and on the left wing the Third Army in two lines in echelon, on the Ornain and on the Upper Maas. The cavalry divisions had been sent out in front to reconnoitre the country and get in touch with the enemy; two squadrons of Rhenish dragoons, under the command of Major von Klocke, had already reached the valley of the Marne.

On the basis of the information obtained concerning the positions of the enemy, the Great Head-Quarters at Pont-à-Mousson issued on the 21st of August, at 11 o'clock in the morning, an order directing the advance of the two German Armies upon Châlons, as follows:

"A great part of the French army having been defeated and being shut up in Metz by seven and a half army corps, the army section of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Saxony, and the Third Army will continue their advance westwards, in such a manner that the latter should in general precede the former on the left by one march, in order to attack the enemy, in case he should offer resistance, in front and on the right flank and thus to force him northwards away from Paris.

"According to reports received here, sections of the enemy are believed to be at Verdun, being probably only on their rearward march to Châlons, where parts of the corps of MacMahon and Faily, as well as newly organized forces and individual regiments from Paris and from the west and the south of France are assembling. Against this point will concentrate by the 26th of August the army section of the Crown Prince of Saxony and the Third Army on the line St. Menchould—Vitry-le-Français. The former will start on the 23rd of this month, taking the direction of the line St. Menchould—Daucourt—Givry-en-Argonne, where the advanced guards must arrive on the 26th. Verdun is to be taken by a coup-de-main, or to be passed from the south, leaving it under observation. The Third Army will arrange its march so that its advanced guards reach on the 26th the line St. Mard-sur-le-Mont—Vitry-le-Français.

"The Great Head-Quarters of His Majesty the King moves to Commercy on the 23rd.

"VON MOLTKE."

A further order by the Commander-in-Chief ran as follows:





"All the three armies now having had the opportunity of encountering the enemy in a series of bloody, but always victorious, contests, I am impelled to express my deeply felt Royal thanks to the troops of all corps in the great United Army, for the courage and devotion they have uniformly evinced. With God's help we have gained great successes in a short time, but grave struggles are still before us. But at the head of such troops I look forward to the coming warlike events with utmost confidence, and with the conviction that we shall gain the aim set before us, the conquest of a lasting peace for our fatherland.

"WILHELM.

"Head-Quarters, Pont-à-Mousson, August 21st, 1870."

The Third and Fourth Armies began their advance on the 23rd of August. By the time the right wing had arrived in the country east of Verdun the Corps of the



-  **IV** 4th Prussian Army Corps
-  **62** Gardes 2nd Cavalry Divisions
-  **12** 12th French Army Corps
-  **1** 1st French Cavalry Division

A.A. Positions of the German Armies on 22 August.					
A1, A1.	"	"	"	French	" " 22 "
B.B.	"	"	"	German	" " 26 "
B1, B1.	"	"	"	French	" " 26 "
C.C.	"	"	"	German	" " 31 " early.
C1, C1.	"	"	"	French	" " 31 " "

POSITIONS OF THE TWO ARMIES FROM THE 22ND TO THE 31ST OF AUGUST.

(Scale 16 English miles to 1 inch.)

Guards and the IVth Corps had approached the Maas and in places crossed it. Of the Third Army the 4th Cavalry Division had got as far as Dizier, and the leading corps to the valley of the Saulx.

On the same day, that this westward march had begun, the Army of Châlons had also started on its march from the neighbourhood of Reims to the Suippe.

On the 23rd of August an attempt was made by an energetic bombardment with field artillery to effect the surrender of the fortress of Toul. The possession of this fortress was important, because it just blocked the line of railway which was to maintain connection with home, when once the loop round Metz should be finished. On the 16th of August an attack of the IVth Corps upon Toul had produced no result; since the 19th of August, also, a Bavarian section of the IInd Corps had been posted before the fortress, which was hotly bombarded by two Bavarian batteries and the corps-artillery of the VIth Corps, from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 9 each morning till half-past 6 in the evening, with an interval of 4 hours. As negotiations led to no result, the Commandant resolutely refusing to surrender, and as the conviction had been gained that Toul could not be taken in this manner, only a small section of the IInd Bavarian Corps was left for its observation till the 27th of August, when they were relieved by three battalions of Landwehr. Not till the 12th of September, when the 17th Division arrived, did the siege assume a more serious character. On the morning of the 23rd, 62 pieces of artillery thundered against the fortress; in the afternoon the white flag fluttered from the cathedral. There were made prisoners 101 officers and 2240 men, and there were taken 71 heavy guns and more than 3000 small arms. Above all—now the road to Paris was open.

The front formed by the cavalry before the German armies, stretched, on the evening of the 23rd of August, from Sivry, north of Verdun, as far as St. Dizier. Two squadrons of Rhenish dragoons on the left wing had ridden far in advance to near the city of Châlons. The marches had to be made in streaming rain. Excepting a reconnaissance towards Verdun, when a squadron of the 17th Uhlans discovered that the fortress was occupied, but that no troops were assembling there,—and excepting also the attack upon Toul, no contact with the enemy had taken place on the 23rd.

The squadrons of the 5th Regiment of Dragoons, which have already been frequently mentioned, rendered pre-eminent services in reconnoitring; half a squadron of them had advanced on the 24th August to the camp of Châlons and up to the Mourmelon, 3 miles (= 15 Eng. miles) north of the town. It was 5 miles (= 25 Eng. miles) in advance of its division, and 10 miles (= 50 Eng. miles) in front of the nearest infantry. In the camp they found the magazines burnt, but still considerable stores of provisions, 1000 tents, a great quantity of war material, also cannon of heavy calibre.

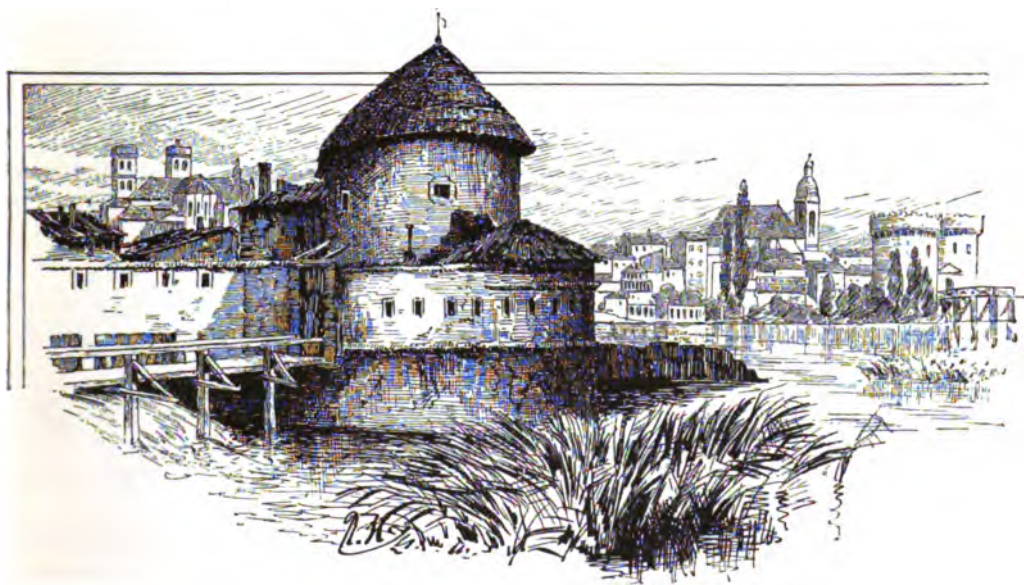
On the 23rd of August they had already learnt at the Great Head-Quarters at Commercy, that the Emperor Napoleon was at Reims with a part of his forces. This important piece of news was derived from the French papers, and telegraphed from London. ¹ It ran as follows: "MacMahon's army assembled at Reims. Emperor Napoleon with the army. MacMahon trying to effect a junction with Bazaine." Also a letter of a French officer, sent by the Army of Investment before Metz to the Great Head-Quarters, expressed the hope of being relieved by the Army of Châlons. But in spite of that, those in chief command necessarily were on the 24th of August in the greatest uncertainty about the measures and intentions of the enemy; the

¹ The Paris democracy was its own worst enemy. By this betrayal of the plans, the march upon Sedan was deprived of its only chance of success. [*Trs.*]

troops had nowhere had touch with him, and only the Rhenish dragoons had announced his departure to Reims.

Only the Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Maas was primarily informed of the news received. He ordered the 5th Division of Cavalry to send a regiment off on the 25th in a northerly direction, with instructions to advance beyond Dun and to destroy the line of railway west of Montmédy.

Meanwhile, on the afternoon of the 24th, the Commander-in-Chief of the Third Army had received from the 4th Cavalry Division a Paris newspaper confirming the information already received, and mentioning that MacMahon with 150,000 men had taken up a position at Reims. Reims being further off from the army than Châlons,



VERDUN

the Crown Prince of Prussia determined to gain the destinations prescribed for his army on the 25th instead of the 26th of August.

There was meanwhile no change made in the order issued on the 21st of August for the movements of the armies up to the 26th. On the 24th of August, in cool weather, and with skilfully made arrangements, and under the protection afforded by the cavalry which had been sent far in front, the marches were made as easily as if in times of peace, although pretty heavy tasks had to be imposed on the corps of the Third Army. Only the XIIth Corps on that day got into touch with isolated sections of the enemy, and was involved in a fight in front of Verdun.

Verdun blocked the great highway leading to Châlons; its walls, as well as its citadel in the west, were storm-proof, but the place is surrounded on all sides by heights, within range of the town and its fortifications. Cavalry patrols had announced that the place seemed to be but poorly garrisoned.

On the 24th of August the XIIth Corps, whose line of march was blocked by Verdun,

was to try the *coup de main* that had been ordered; the country to the east having been reconnoitred the day previously by the General in Command, Prince George of Saxony. At 10 o'clock in the morning on the 24th the corps stood ready, the 5th and 12th Cavalry Divisions being ordered to observe and enclose the place on the left bank. The vanguard of the 23rd Division, commanded by Colonel Baron von Hausen, advancing from Eix, had arrived at the western extremity of the wood in front of the place, and was sending forward the 1st battalion of the Regiment of Rifles. Passing through the suburb of Pavé, which was occupied by armed inhabitants, the companies got to within 300 paces of the works. Though they suffered losses from the enemy's rifle and artillery fire, they yet were able to keep up an active fire at the artillery-men and infantry who could be seen on the walls. It was impossible to advance further, nor were they intended to do so. Meanwhile, positions had been taken up by the 2nd battalion of the Rifles in the suburb of Pavé, and by the Divisional Artillery on the heights south of the great highway; and the latter had opened fire against the works and the town. The heavy batteries of the 24th Division and the Corps Artillery brought forward upon the heights at Belrupt, joined in; their fire was but feebly answered by the heavy artillery on the walls. After the bombardment had lasted three-quarters of an hour, the Aide-de-Camp to the General Commanding, First Lieutenant von Schimpff, accompanied by a trumpeter of artillery, was sent to the fortress to demand its surrender. Spite of the fire directed against him, he still got up to the Commandant, who, however, resolutely declined to surrender. Returning from the fortress, the trumpeter was badly hit and fell from his horse. Already a number of armed inhabitants had rushed forward out of a house, upon the wounded man, when the riflemen Hofmann and Jäger, and the hospital assistant Walther sprang forward from their cover, and, amidst a fierce fire of small arms, rescued him from his dangerous position and brought him back. The bestowal of the Iron Cross rewarded the deed of these brave men.

Verdun having been found to be sufficiently armed, garrisoned and storm-proof, and the Commandant of the fortress having refused all negotiation, an attack by surprise ceased to hold out any hope. Accordingly the attempt to take the place by a *coup de main* had to be abandoned, the march being continued by going round the fortress. Only the 48th Infantry Brigade, which was reinforced, remained till August the 25th in observation before Verdun. Our losses had been insignificant, 1 officer and 19 men, almost exclusively from the Regiment of Rifles. This fortress afterwards gave the Germans a good deal more trouble. The garrison defended itself admirably, even making repeated sallies, and were far superior in numbers to the besiegers. Not till after the fall of Metz, when a sufficient number of infantry and pioneers had arrived with 102 pieces of artillery for bombardment, did Verdun surrender, on the 8th of November, with 6000 men and 140 guns.

On the evening of the 24th of August, the Third Army stood with its main forces between St. Dizier and Bar-le-Duc; the IVth Army Corps was at Rosnes; the Corps of Guards at Chaumont-sur-Aire; the XIIth Corps at the Maas, north and south of Verdun. The Cavalry Divisions were far advanced; the Great Head-Quarters were removed to Bar-le-Duc.

The regiment of the 5th Cavalry Division (Brunswick Hussars, No. 17), sent by the Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Maas northwards beyond Dun, did not reach

the wooden railway bridge at Lamouilly, north of Stenay, till night on the 25th August, when they burnt it. The regiment had travelled more than 60 kilometers (= between 37 and 38 Eng. miles) in a rapid march.

The 6th Cavalry Division, advancing on the 25th of August in the direction of the Upper Ante, ¹ had, between Vitry-le-Français and St. Menehould, attacked a battalion of Gardes Mobiles on the march and taken them prisoner. The battalion after having been fired at for a short time by the mounted battery, was almost simultaneously attacked in front and rear by the regiments. More than 1000 men, mostly still in civilian dress, and 27 officers were forced to surrender after a short defence, and were taken to Triaucourt. In Passavant, a small mountain-village at the foot of the Argonne forest, they endeavoured to escape, but were mostly fetched in again by the dragoon-guards and the Jägers of the guard who were quartered in that district. Many paid for their attempt at flight with death or severe wounds. The loss of the Prussian cavalry was slight, only the Commander of the 3rd Regiment of Uhlans, Major von Friesen, remained fatally wounded on the field. On the same day the 4th Cavalry Division also met with some success on their ride upon Chaussée-sur-Marne, south-east of Châlons. Upon a mere threat the commandant of the small fortress of Vitry-le-Français, which was but feebly garrisoned by Gardes Nationales, surrendered at discretion.

As soon as the Maas was crossed the population manifested a decidedly hostile disposition. It was also known that, by command of the French Government, Free-corps, called Francs-tireurs, were to be formed, whose task it would be to attack German soldiers marching singly or in small bodies. These Francs-tireurs, only partly in uniform, whose numbers greatly increased in the course of the campaign, could not be regarded as soldiers, and our troops were ordered to prevent such gatherings as much as possible, and to forward prisoners to their divisional head-quarters. "They are amenable to martial law and liable to be sentenced to death" were the concluding words of the order.

Although, from the information and reports received on the 25th of August, it could not yet be made out how MacMahon intended to effect his junction with Bazaine, for the straight road from Reims to Metz was barred, and a détour along the Belgian frontier had to be looked upon as a very dangerous enterprise, still at the great Head-Quarters it was determined on the 26th to move directly upon Reims, and to pay special attention to the state of things on the right flank. The Army of the Maas was therefore to advance on the 26th in a north-westerly direction, into the line Vienne—Villers-en-Argonne (the cavalry being well forward, especially towards Vouziers and Buzancy); the Third Army was to advance, its heads reaching the line Givry-en-Argonne—Changy, north-east of Vitry.

Unless special reports should come in, the 27th was intended to be a day of rest.

This order could only be carried out in part. The instructions given had to be altered over night, for on the evening preceding the fateful 26th of August, fresh and important news arrived at Head-Quarters, which led to the expectation that French troops were marching upon Vouziers.

A French newspaper that came to hand had an article saying that no French General could leave his comrade in the lurch without incurring the curse of the father-

¹ A small tributary of the Aisne, into which it flows from the west side, a short distance above St. Menehould. [*Trs.*]

land; other papers from Paris reported the speeches made in the National Assembly, where the speakers stigmatised it as a disgrace to the French nation if the Army of the Rhine were left without support. There also came a telegram from London, containing the information, derived from the Paris "Temps" of the 23rd August, that MacMahon had suddenly resolved to hasten to the assistance of Bazaine and that the whole Army of Châlons had already left Reims.

If now the German Armies executed the marches ordered for the 26th, then the German right wing would in the evening be five miles (some 25 Engl. miles) distant from the right wing of the Army of Châlons, and both armies being then equally far from Metz, it could no longer have been in time to bar the way of the enemy, who was hastening thither.

Major Blume in his "Operations of Sedan" etc., gives the following account of the deliberations and resolves at the Great Head-Quarters on the 25th of August, after the receipt of the above-mentioned information: "A march of the enemy to the left appeared doubtful, even improbable: and any counter-measures of ours might prove futile. For the army, extended as it now was, to change front to the right would require time. All the supply columns coming up were calculated for a direct forward march, and a side movement must cause great difficulties. At Head-Quarters they were face to face with a weighty decision. If Bazaine's Army were really set free in the rear of our advancing forces, then the march upon Paris could not at once be continued. A preliminary condition for the investment of the capital was that the forces outside it should be annihilated or held fast. The strategy followed hitherto did not cause the formation of unusual resolves to appear impossible. It is rarely possible in war to base one's measures on a positive knowledge of the position and intentions of the enemy.—On the very evening of the 25th of August His Majesty the King ordered the march of the Army towards the Maas."

In the course of the night of the 25th all arrangements were made to be able to move on the 26th towards the north, with the Army of the Maas and the two neighbouring corps of the Third Army,—Ist and IInd Bavarian Corps—in case the cavalry sent on to Vouziers and Buzancy, should confirm the report that the enemy was marching upon Metz.

The following order for the Army of the Maas was issued from the Head-Quarters at Bar-le-Duc on the 25th of August, at 11 o'clock at night, a copy of it being sent to the Third Army: "From news just received it appears not improbable that Marshal MacMahon has resolved to attempt the relief of the main army shut up in Metz. If so, he must have been on his march from Reims ever since the 23rd inst. and the heads of his columns may to-day have reached Vouziers. In this case it will be necessary to concentrate the Army Section of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Saxony towards the right wing, in some such way as that the XIIth Army Corps should move upon Varennes, whilst the IVth and the Corps of Guards should approach the Verdun—Varennes road. The Ist and IInd Bavarian Army Corps would likewise follow this movement. Whether these marches should be entered upon must depend on the reports probably already in the possession of His Royal Highness, and for which we cannot wait here.—The Corps of the Guards and the IVth Army Corps have received orders from here, not to enter at once early to-morrow morning upon the march ordered to-day, but to cook and wait for marching orders."

Thus, accordingly to the news received, the corps just mentioned were to take a northerly or north-westerly direction, but for the other corps of the Third Army the orders already issued remained in force. On the evening of the 25th of August there actually stood a hostile force of 150,000 men, engaged on an eastward march at no more than two days' march from the right wing of the German army marching to the west.

MARCH OF THE THIRD AND FOURTH ARMIES TO THE RIGHT FROM THE 26TH TO THE 29TH OF AUGUST.—ENGAGEMENTS AT BUZANCY AND NOUART.

The preliminary movements for the march of the German armies to the right began on the 26th of August; and within six days the Army of Châlons was surrounded and forced to lay down its arms on the field of Sedan. The weather had grown exceedingly unpropitious—persistent rain, hail and storm, on sodden mountain roads in the Argonne district greatly enhanced the difficulties of the march.

Heavy tasks had to be imposed on the troops, but these were always borne with goodwill and cheerfulness.

As has already been mentioned, the order of the 25th of August from the Great Head Quarters had left to the Crown Prince of Saxony to decide whether to begin this movement to the right. Immediately after the arrival of this order, he ordered the advance of the XIIth Army Corps upon Varennes, whilst the Saxon and 5th Divisions of Cavalry should reconnoitre towards Vouziers and Grand-Pré, and the 6th should watch the neighbourhood of Reims. Considering the gravity of the situation, the Crown Prince determined, moreover, not to wait for further reports, but to order the remaining corps of the Army of the Maas, which had already been set in motion in the direction ordered on the morning of the 25th, to turn aside towards the North. The Corps of the Guards was ordered to move upon Dombasle at 11 o'clock, and the IVth was to follow them at 2 o'clock.

The reports received during the course of the 26th of August by the Great Head-Quarters and by the Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Maas, fully confirmed the correctness of the conjectures hitherto formed. The presence at Vouziers and Grand-Pré of French troops with whom touch had been lost since the Battle of Wörth, was ascertained. MacMahon was marching from Châlons in an easterly direction, turning the right flank of the Germans in order to hold out his hand to Bazaine and unite with him. It was now a question of intercepting this movement hitherto looked upon as an impossible one, and gaining a decisive victory.

On the 26th of August, at noon, the IIIrd Army stood compactly closed up on its right wing, and with its left ready either to continue the march upon Reims or to follow the Army of the Maas towards the North. After a consultation at the Great Head-Quarters, the Crown Prince of Prussia had ordered his Prussian Corps to



SAXON CAVALRYMAN.

advance on the 27th as far as the neighbourhood of Saint Ménehould and Vavray; whilst the Bavarians turned northward on the afternoon of the 26th and reached their destinations, Erize-la-petite and Triaucourt, after midnight 26th—27th, after a forced march in pouring rain.

The orders issued during the forenoon of the 26th were sent to the Commander-in-Chief of the IInd Army before Metz, with instructions to despatch two Corps of the Army of Investment into the neighbourhood Damvillers and Mangiennes, which should be reached on the 28th so as to block up the space between the right bank of the Maas and the Belgian frontier. If need be, the investment of Metz on the right bank of the Moselle should be temporarily abandoned, but under all circumstances the Army of the Rhine should be prevented from breaking out westward. In consequence of this the IIIrd and IInd Corps had marched to Etain and Briey. On the evening of the 26th the forces on the two sides were posted as follows:—The Ist and Vth Corps of the Army of Châlons, together with the 2nd Cavalry Division, were between Le Chesne and Attigny, compactly closed up and facing west; the right wing, the VIIth Corps, north of Vouziers, with sections pushed forward as far as Vouziers and Grand-Pré, The IInd Corps on the left wing at Tourteron; in front of the army the 25th Cavalry Division at Ochets.

On the German side there stood in the first line, the 12th Cavalry Division on the road from Dun to Varennes, the XIIth Corps at Varennes and north of it, the 5th and 6th Cavalry Divisions with their main forces at Montcheutin and Tahure. The 4th Cavalry Division and the Württemberg Cavalry Brigade at Châlons; the Bavarian Brigade of Uhlans at Suippe, the Corps of Guards and the IVth Army Corps at Dombasle and Fleury. Of the IIIrd Army, the two Bavarian Army Corps were advancing upon Triaucourt and Erize-la-petite; the main bodies being in the space between Revigny and Vitry-le-Français. The Great Head-Quarters and the Head-Quarters of the army of the Maas had moved to Clermont-en-Argonne.

At a late hour of the night the Army of the Maas was ordered by the Great Head-Quarters to continue the march on the 27th on Damvillers, also to reach the passages of the Maas at Dun and Stenay. Stenay was the point primarily threatened, and it might have to be held with the utmost efforts by the Saxon troops that had been sent there. The cavalry, assembled in force, were to fall upon the enemy's right flank, the Ist and IInd Bavarian Corps to advance upon Nixéville and Dombasle.

To protect the flank march the Crown Prince of Saxony had ordered the 5th and 6th Cavalry Divisions to advance upon Grand-Pré and Vouziers, the Cavalry Division of the Guards to advance upon Sommerance, and the Saxon Cavalry Division upon Rémonville. Behind this curtain formed by nearly a hundred squadrons, the XIIth Corps was to march from Varennes to Dun, there to cross the Maas and occupy the passage of the Maas at Stenay; the Corps of the Guards to reach the neighbourhood of Montfaucon, and the IVth Corps to arrive west of Verdun. No danger was to be apprehended, for the flank march of the XIIth Corps, because the cavalry were reconnoitring a day's march further north.

The advanced guard of the Third Army had reached St. Ménehould, its main body, the XIth and VIth Corps and the Württemberg Division, stood further south. The 2nd Cavalry Division had got as far as Coole, west of Vitry-le-Français, and the 4th as far as north of Suippe.

The movements ordered for the 27th were executed. Without encountering the enemy the XIIth Corps had pushed forward the 48th Brigade of Infantry, reinforced by artillery and cavalry, as far as Stenay; this place, situated on the right bank of the Maas, at the point where the great highways Montmédy—Vouziers and Sedan—Verdun intersect, was occupied by the brigade and prepared for defence. Only portions of the 12th Cavalry Division became engaged with the enemy.

The 24th Cavalry Brigade to which Zenker's horse-artillery battery was added, had meanwhile received orders to take up its position at Rémonville and to reconnoitre in the direction of Buzancy and Nouart. Two troops of the 5th and one



THE CROWN PRINCE ALBERT OF SAXONY.

troop of the 1st squadron of the 3rd Cavalry Regiment were sent off by Major-General Senfft von Pilsach beyond Bayonville, which was not occupied by the enemy, to Buzancy. North of this place stood Brahaut's Cavalry Division, which had advanced several squadrons of the 12th Regiment of Chasseurs in a southerly direction beyond Buzancy, and had occupied the entrances to the place by dismounted men.

To induce the enemy to deploy his forces, two squadrons of the 3rd Saxon Cavalry attacked the Chasseurs, who were defeated in a fierce hand-to-hand fight, and pursued as far as Buzancy. But reinforcements hurrying up and the fire of carabineers necessitated the abandonment of the place. The pursuing chasseurs were fired upon by the horse battery and attacked in their left flank by the 1st squadron. After a

short contest the enemy again retired. Buzancy, which had been evacuated, was occupied in the afternoon by Von Redern's brigade of the 5th Cavalry Division. Our loss in the fight amounted to 32 men and 27 horses. The enemy left 12 dead on the field. Lieutenant-Colonel de la Porte of the 12th Chasseurs being severely wounded, was made prisoner.

The general import of all the information received on the 27th of August was, that on that day the Army of Châlons had not reached the Maas, had gained no start, and had recalled the portions of the VIIth Corps which on the day before had been sent forward as far as Grand-Pré and Clizy. The German Commanders were now



PRINCE GEORGE OF SAXONY.

accurately informed about the enemy's arrangements, not only from the reports of the cavalry, but from information given by a traveller, who had met small parties of the French at Beaumont, but 100,000 men between Le Chesne and Buzancy; they thus knew that the enemy was still on the left bank of the Maas, but MacMahon had not obtained any exact information about the movements and strength of the Germans.

There was now a reasonable prospect of coming up to the Army of Châlons on the left bank of the Maas, and accordingly the co-operation of the two corps sent from Metz in that direction was no longer required. Orders issued on the 27th at

7 o'clock in the evening prescribed for the next day or two an advance upon Vouziers, Buzancy and Beaumont.

As has already been stated in the account of the operations of the Army of Châlons, the Marshal had been informed of the march of the Crown Prince of Saxony upon Buzancy; and there was no longer any prospect of Bazaine breaking through, as he had still been at Metz on the 25th: the prospect of an approaching junction of the two French armies had disappeared. Nevertheless the retreat of the Army of Châlons upon Mézières, which had been planned and begun, was again abandoned and an advance upon Montmédy for the 28th was once more contemplated.

On the 28th of August the German armies were intended to reach the following positions: The XIIth Corps and the Corps of the Guards, in the line Stenay—Dun—Banterville, were to form in a manner an advanced right flank with the right wing on the Maas, having in support the IVth Corps, $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile (abt. 3 Engl. miles) behind their front, and, two miles (= 10 Engl. miles) further back, the two Bavarian Corps in échelon on the left.

A decisive engagement with the enemy was, however, still to be avoided, as the remaining corps of the Third Army could not on that day be in position, they having reached the region north of St. Menchould. It was for the present only necessary, to push the cavalry well forward, so as to gain touch with the enemy and discover his movements.

The 5th and 6th Cavalry Divisions had been added on the 28th of August to the Third Army; the former advanced into the line Monthois—Grand-Pré, the latter as far as Vouziers, sections being pushed forward as far as Vioncq and Attigny. The Cavalry Division of the Guards together with the Brigade of Uhlans had reached Buzancy, and seen the positions of the enemy. The Saxon Cavalry Regiment of the Guards had also been ordered to Buzancy. Arrived on the heights at Bar, it suddenly found itself before the enemy, who, about a division strong, was encamped in order of battle beyond the mill-brook and was engaged in cooking; at sight of the cavalry, agitated commotion arose in the camp. The infantry flew to arms, and the artillery opened fire. The superiority of the enemy—a division of the Vth French Army Corps—and the hot, though ineffective fire of shells compelled the cavalry to fall back. The 12th Cavalry Division, in streaming rain, encamped in the evening at Andevanne, leaving patrols to watch the enemy.

The XIIth Corps expected a hostile attack in its position at Dun and Stenay, and had prepared it for defence, but no attack was made. Only a detachment sent out from Stenay encountered the French. It was to destroy the railway station at Chauvaney near Montmédy on the line to Sedan, and did so after a short fight.

On the 29th of August it was left to the discretion of the Crown Prince of Saxony to unite his three Army Corps in a defensive position west of Dun, pending the arrival, at 10 o'clock, of the 1st Bavarian Corps at Sommerance. The IInd Bavarian Corps was ordered to advance upon St. Juvin, and the Vth Corps upon Grand-Pré. Should the Army of the Maas not encounter superior forces of the enemy, it was also left to the discretion of its commander to advance, as early as the 29th, up to the road Buzancy—Stenay and seize it. He determined to advance forthwith. The XIIth Corps again crossed over to the left bank of the Maas at Dun, and, led on by the 48th Infantry Brigade hitherto left at Stenay (and whose place had been taken by the regiment of

Zieten-hussars), followed its cavalry division, which had been directed upon Nouart, and whose heads had met hostile troops north of that place.

The Vth Corps of the French moved, on the 29th, in two columns in the direction of the Maas. Upon the appearance of Saxon troops at Nouart, General de Failly determined to halt and cause Lespart's division, on the right wing, to take up a position between Bois-des-Dames and Champy, facing south.

The advanced guard of the XIIth Corps (46th Brigade of Infantry, 1st Cavalry Regiment and two batteries, commanded by Colonel von Seydlitz) reached the line of heights between Barricourt and the Bois-de-Nouart and opened the battle with a fire of artillery. In the first line stood the 102nd, in the second the 103rd Regiment, a company of which occupied Nouart. The 1st Regiment of Cavalry had meanwhile been despatched to reconnoitre on both flanks, and a heavy battery from the main body had been placed upon the height at Nouart. The main body itself continued its advance; the 3rd Cavalry Regiment was immediately south of the village.

To ascertain the strength and position of the enemy, the General in command of the advanced guard ordered an attack upon Champy. Two battalions of the 103rd Regiment crossed the swampy watercourse of the brook Viseppe amidst a heavy fire of artillery, and advanced upon Champy. The 1st battalion of the regiment had also somewhat later been led in the direction of a wood lying south of Champy. A short attack by the French led to no result, beyond the calling up of certain parts of the 102nd Regiment.

It was not intended to continue the attack. The object of the reconnaissance was gained, and after some batteries of the 24th Division had joined in the engagement, it was stopped by order of Prince George of Saxony, the General in Command, at half-past four in the afternoon. The 46th Brigade turned back to the heights south of Nouart, and the French division also marched off in a northerly direction, General de Failly having meanwhile been ordered to march upon Beaumont; an order to the same effect on the previous day had not reached him in time, because the officer bringing it had been made prisoner.

Our losses, amounting to 14 officers and 349 men, fell in the main upon the 103rd Regiment of Infantry.

Of the Third Army the 6th Cavalry Division followed on the 29th of August the march of the enemy; the 16th Hussars, fighting on foot, took the village of Voncq from his rear guard. The 5th Cavalry Division turned upon Attigny, and thence against the communications of the French army to the rear, destroying the line of railway between Rethel and Mézières; the 4th remained at Vouziers, and the 2nd advanced as far as Gratreuil. The 1st Bavarian Corps came to Sommerance, but the IIInd, after a toilsome march across the mountains, only got as far as Cornay without crossing the Aire. The Vth Corps, together with the Württemberg Division, reached Grand-Pré; the XIth Monthois and Morel, and the VIth Vienne. The Great Head-Quarters of His Majesty the King had been moved to Grand-Pré.

Now the days of decision were at hand. The order issued on the 29th at 11 o'clock at night prescribed a simultaneous attack of both armies on the 30th of August, and directed the Army of the Maas not to cross the line Fossé—Beauclair before 10 o'clock in the morning, so as to enable the leading corps of the Third Army, to whose right wing the direction upon Beaumont had been assigned, to join in the battle. For this

there were ready in the first line $5\frac{1}{2}$ corps with numerous artillery, supported by 2 corps as reserve.

The Army of Châlons occupied on the evening of the 29th an area having the shape of an irregular quadrilateral, whose sides were about 2 miles (= 10 Engl. miles) in length: the VIIth Corps was encamped at Ochles; the Vth was marching upon Beaumont; the 1st Corps, with the Great Head-Quarters, had reached Raucourt, and the XIIth Mouzon, on the right bank of the Maas. MacMahon hoped to collect all his forces at that place.

THE BATTLE OF BEAUMONT.



The supreme orders issued from the Head-Quarters at Grand-Pré at 11 o'clock in the evening on the 29th of August ran as follows:

"All the reports received to-day agree that the main forces of the enemy will be situated to-morrow morning between Beaumont and Le Chesne, and possibly south of that line. His Majesty orders that the enemy be attacked. On the right the Army Section of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Saxony will advance at 10 o'clock beyond the line Beauclair—Fossé, in the direction of Beaumont. It will use the roads east of the great highway Buzancy—Beaumont. The Third Army will start early and move with its right wing directed upon Beaumont via Buzancy, and be ready to support with two army-corps the attack of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Saxony, the remaining corps meanwhile pursuing the direction upon Le Chesne. His Majesty will start at 10 o'clock from here to Buzancy.

"MOLTKE."

In consequence of this order the Crown Prince interviewed the Commanding Generals at Bayonville, at 8 a.m. on the 30th of August, and gave instructions that the divisions of the IVth and XIIth Army Corps should each advance by one of the existing four roads, through the zone of forest 4 to 5 kilometers ($2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 English miles) wide, which lay before them, the Corps of the Guards meanwhile remaining at Nouart as reserve. The attack was to be prepared for by the artillery, but not to be delivered before the arrival of the lateral columns.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Third Army ordered the 1st Bavarian Corps to advance via Sommauthe upon Beaumont, the IInd Corps to follow as reserve, the Vth to march upon St. Pierremont, the XIth and the Württemberg Division upon Le Chesne. The VIth Corps being furthest in the rear was to go into cantonments at Vouziers, on the left bank of the Aisne; the 5th Cavalry Division was ordered to advance into the neighbourhood of Tourteron, so as to cut off the retreat of hostile sections towards the west; the 4th to advance via Quatre-Champs to Châtillon, the 6th to Semuy and the 2nd as far as Buzancy.

have arrived. But General von Schöler, the commander of the division, did not think that so favourable an opportunity for surprising the enemy should be neglected.

The leading troops, the 4th Battalion of Jägers, and the batteries of the advanced guard, had hardly moved into position, when in the camp immediately south of the town, bustle and excitement were observed, a peasant having brought the news of the approach of the German troops. The general in command, who had meanwhile hurried up, ordered the batteries to open fire at once, and thus the French were completely taken by surprise and thrown for a short while into disorder. Dense swarms of skirmishers, followed by companies in close formation, moved forward and poured a heavy fire upon the Prussian troops, who could only gradually receive support as the columns on the march issued out of the wood.

The attack delivered by the enemy about 1 o'clock in the afternoon, directly encountered 8 batteries and 6½ battalions. From our right wing Lieutenant-Colonel Count Finck von Finckenstein with the 66th Regiment, which was deployed into line, rushed upon the enemy's swarms of skirmishers and drove them back after a hot fire of musketry. The enemy's attack was soon arrested and changed into a retreat through the camp and the town as far as the heights to the north of it.

The Prussian battalions pressed after them and reached the southern camp, which had been occupied by Lespart's Division, where numerous tents, equipment of every kind and rifles piled were found. Single horses were standing about, the fires were burning in the field kitchens;—the whole afforded a peculiar scene of punished carelessness. †

Meanwhile the heads of the XIIth Corps had also issued out of the wood. For want of room to deploy, the 24th Division had at first to come up behind the right wing of the IVth Corps, its batteries being inserted in the 23rd Division which was advancing on the road Stenay—Beaumont. The latter division posted itself west of the Vanne stream and the cavalry division halted east of the Forêt de Jeunet.

Fourteen batteries of the IVth Corps followed in échelon the movements of their infantry, at half-past 2 they were planted on the heights south of Beaumont, and opened fire against the enemy's artillery which was north of the place. Thither also the Saxon batteries, brought up into the fighting line, directed their fire.

† A military surgeon writes: "In the camp everything lay about in the greatest confusion; we had surprised the soldiers at their meal; here one had been shot down engaged in cooking potato-porridge, there one got severely wounded as he was putting on foot-wraps; in a somewhat larger tent a French captain lay dead, holding in his hand a drawn sword and having several bottles of red wine before him.



GENERAL DE FAILLY.

On the left flank of the IVth Corps parts of the Third Army had also joined in the fight. The 1st Bavarian Army Corps, having arrived at Sommauthe at $\frac{1}{4}$ past 11, had found the forest unoccupied, and accelerated its march on hearing the vigorous artillery fire from Beaumont. Two batteries hastened forward and poured shells upon the camp north of the town, while the advanced guard continued its advance upon the farm of La Thibaudine, on the great highway. There strong bodies of the enemy unexpectedly appeared on the left flank of the 4th Infantry Brigade which was leading, and received them with a hot fire from the above-named farm and from the wood of Warniforêt. This was Conseil-Dumesnil's Division of the VIIth French Corps, which was moving from Stonne in the direction of Mouzon, and had orders there to cross the Maas.

This engagement began at about 2 in the afternoon; the 3rd battalion of the 10th Regiment of Infantry at once wheeled to the left, and courageously fell upon the enemy, but the offensive could not be successfully assumed until reinforcements had arrived, when they advanced irresistibly into the wood and drove the enemy's infantry back in disorder. The battle here was long undecided, and the Bavarians suffered heavy losses.

The 1st Bavarian Army Corps was now ordered to move in the direction of La Besace; but first they had to furnish the support required by the IVth Corps, by sending them a mixed brigade, under Colonel Schuch. The spirits of the Bavarian troops were high as they entered the fight. Exulting and singing, the battalions marched past General von der Tann, their commanding officer. The 1st Bavarian Division had reached Raucourt as dusk set in, and occupied the place after a short resistance.

Meanwhile, on the right wing there had been a pause in the fight. The French batteries planted on the heights south of the wood of Le Fays endeavoured, by frequent change of position, to escape the destructive effect of the combined artillery of the IVth and XIIth Corps, and at 3 o'clock they retired at a trot in a northerly direction.

After 1 o'clock the infantry of the XIIth Corps had also engaged in the fight. The regiment of rifles brought forward from the column of route of the 23rd Division, had advanced at the double upon the farm of Beaulieu, and storming on from there, had driven bodies of the enemy's infantry out of the wood. The batteries of both the divisions, and, by order of Prince George, the general in command, also the Corps Artillery, had meanwhile combined their fire against the enemy's artillery on the heights north of Beaumont, while the regiment of grenadiers of the Life Guards^{*} was ordered to move forward in the direction of Létanne, and the rest of the infantry came up west of the Vanne stream. The 12th Division of Cavalry had remained on the right bank of the Maas, advancing towards the Carignan—Mouzon road.

At a quarter to four in the afternoon the Crown Prince of Saxony had arrived before Beaumont, and after this the IVth Corps, which had formed north of the little town for further action, began a fresh advance in a northerly direction: it had the 8th Division on the left, and the 7th Division on the right of the main road. On the right wing the 45th Brigade joined in the attack, the regiment of grenadiers of the Life Guards of this brigade now occupying the hill north of Létanne. The 101st and 108th Regiments followed the 13th Infantry Brigade in the direction of the Bois-de-Givodeau. The 24th Division had at this time come up north of Beaumont.

^{*} Saxon guards belonging to the XIIth Corps, not to the Prussian Guards Corps. [*Trs.*]

The enemy had now completely disappeared from view, but the divisional cavalry regiments sent out to reconnoitre were received with a hot fire and checked.

Meanwhile General de Failly had rallied his retreating troops upon the Mont de Brune and by Villemontry, under cover of a rear-guard posted on the hill north-east of Yoncq and at the southern edge of the Bois-de-Givodeau, and at the same time General Lebrun, commander of the XIIth French Corps, had sent forward through Mouzon a brigade of infantry and one of cuirassiers with three batteries, to receive and support the Vth Corps. By a vigorous assault of the 93rd Regiment the above-mentioned hill was taken, but the possession of the wood of Givodeau required further struggles and sacrifices.

The 13th Brigade was led against this wood. The battalions were immediately met by a heavy fire from its south-eastern edge, but owing to the great distance they could not reply to it. ¹ With beating drums the men of the 26th marched along; the fire of the hostile masses tore gaps in their lines, but these were immediately closed up; never was the connection broken. At a distance of 250 paces from the enemy, exposed to the powerful effect of his rapid fire, the troops broke into double time and with "March! Get out!" and hurrahs they reached the edge of the wood, which the French evacuated, retiring to Villemontry.

As the Commander-in-Chief intended to force the enemy out of this place, the 45th Brigade was ordered to advance against it along the road in the valley. The long columns of route were exposed to a heavy fire from parts of the XIIth Corps of the French from the right bank of the Maas. The 6th Heavy Battery was quickly brought up, it unlimbered on the hill at about half-past 5 in the afternoon and fired upon the troops on the other side of the river. Captain Verwoner, although fired upon from the front and from the flank, maintained his difficult post for three-quarters of an hour. Strange to say the battery only had one man wounded. It ultimately returned to the heights north of Létanne, where meanwhile five batteries of the Corps Artillery had engaged the enemy on the opposite side.

The brigade, incessantly galled by the fire of the enemy, had now, jointly with the units of the 13th Brigade, arrived at the northern edge of the wood. Here they had at first to content themselves with defending the conquered ground.

The last defensive position of the enemy before Mouzon was well chosen, and stretched from Mont-de-Brune as far as Villemontry. The Mont-de-Brune, rising like a cone with steep sides, between the brook Yoncq and the great highway, formed their main point of support and was strongly occupied. Parts of the XIIth French Corps had also been called up as far as Villemontry; the 5th Regiment of Cuirassiers stood, ready to charge, at Faubourg-Mouzon. The battalions on the Mont-de-Brune were not able to offer more than a short resistance to the 14th Brigade brought up by General von Zychlinski, and retired along the old Roman road. Under a heavy fire the lines of skirmishers reached the steep commanding height, took a battery and bravely maintained the position. The enemy's infantry attacking from the side of Mouzon was defeated, and a squadron of lancers making a charge was repulsed by firing. An advance from the Roman road in the grounds east of the Yoncq was repelled by cavalry.

¹ The Prussian needle-gun not carrying as far as the French chassepot. [*Trs.*]

The 5th Regiment of Cuirassiers stood alone and immovable north of Faubourg-Mouzon, like a brazen pillar in the midst of the surrounding turmoil. To check the progress of the enemy General de F  nelon ordered a charge. Colonel de Contenson, himself far in front, advanced his regiment at a trot in squadron columns, tightly closed in mass, against the 11th and 12th companies, which formed up four deep for volley firing, with skirmishers between the groups, and awaited the attack. But suddenly the cavalry changed their direction, and rushed upon the 10th company standing in loose formation on the Roman road. Its commander, Captain Helmuth, calmly waited for them, and ordered his men not to fire till he gave the order. When the cuirassiers had come to within 150 paces he leapt before the front and gave the signal for rapid firing. Destructively it bursts forth, many horsemen reel in their saddles and fall, but the regiment, whose commander already lies bleeding on the ground, dashes forward in heedless determination. Not till the horses are within 15 paces of the muzzles



RETURN OF THE FRENCH FROM MOUZON ON THE EVENING OF THE 30TH OF AUGUST.

of the rifles do their first ranks break down, those behind wheel off in the direction of the Maas, pursued by our rapid firing. The regiment lost 9 officers besides its Colonel and a Squadron Commander; more than 100 men and a still greater number of horses were killed or wounded; the company, whose chief had to defend himself in a personal duel against the blows of an old non-commissioned officer of the cuirassiers, suffered scarcely any losses.

Hardly had the charge been shattered, when the artillery and musketry fire of the enemy again burst forth, principally from the right bank of the Maas and from Mouzon, against the troops on the grounds north-east of the Mont-de-Brune. To advance further in this direction was just now impossible. Meanwhile the 5th Division, and the Bavarian Detachment of Colonel Schuch had reached Pourron, taken it after a short fight, and driven the enemy back upon Villers-devant-Mouzon. On the right wing also the 2nd Regiment of Grenadiers with parts of the Saxon rifles and of

the 27th, 71st and 93rd Regiments had taken Villemonttry, the copse north of the village and the farm of Givodeau. The batteries of the IVth Army Corps had followed, and after having overcome numerous difficulties, had unlimbered on the Mont-de-Brune and on both sides of the highway, with the object of initiating from here the final attack of the infantry. General von Zychlinski advanced upon Faubourg-Mouzon, which was defended by the enemy's rear-guard. The borders of the place were taken, and after numerous isolated combats in the place itself, the French, still fighting bravely, were driven back in the direction of Mouzon. Many saved themselves by swimming across the river. Mouzon itself, separated from the faubourg by an arm of the Maas, still remained in the hands of the enemy after the battle.

In the other parts of the field the fight had ceased; owing to the darkness the artillery had to cease firing before 8 o'clock. The troops of the IVth Army Corps camped in the cold night on the ground they had conquered, whilst the XIIth Corps was assembled at Létanne and the Corps of the Guards came up as far as south of Beaumont. Crown Prince Albert of Saxony, who late in the afternoon had assumed on the height of La Sartelle the chief command of the battle, moved his headquarters to Beaumont. In that place the church and the larger buildings were full of wounded, and most of the houses had been reduced to heaps of ruins. The 30th of August brought to the German armies great tactical and strategic successes. The Army of the Maas in a hard eight hours' fight had defeated the Vth, and parts of the VIIth and XIIth Corps of the French. Now, moreover, the Third Army had come up level with the Army of the Maas and gained touch with it. They were already contemplating at the Great Head-Quarters the possibility of MacMahon being pressed against the Belgian frontiers and forced to cross them. The Chancellor of the Confederation¹ had accordingly, as early as the afternoon of the 30th, pointed out this possibility to the North German ambassador at Brussels, and stated that it was expected that the French troops would be disarmed forthwith.

The losses in the battle of Beaumont amounted to about 3500 men, of whom 126 officers and 2878 men were of the IVth Corps. This corps had received its baptism of fire in the war against France, had opened the battle and carried it through to the end.

According to his own account the enemy lost 1800 men dead and wounded and

¹ Count Bismarck, Chancellor of the North German Confederation; as yet Bismarck was not Prince, and the German Empire did not exist. [*Trs.*]



GENERAL GUSTAV V. ALBENSLEBEN.
(Commander of the IVth Corps.)

3000 missing Of the latter more than 2000 were prisoners. The Germans captured 42 guns and much war material left behind in the camps at Beaumont.

The Third Army continued on the 30th of August its march to the north. With the exception of the 1st Bavarian Corps, which, as has already been mentioned, had joined in the battle of Beaumont and late in the afternoon had fought also at La Besace and Raucourt, only the Vth Corps had encountered the enemy. This was ordered to advance upon St. Pierremont and Oches. When the advanced guard had reached the height near St. Pierremont, infantry of the enemy was observed near Stonne, and the batteries of the advanced guard opened fire upon them at distant range. A few well-aimed shells arrested their movement. But an attack against their position was not to be delivered before the XIth Corps, which was on the way, could join in. But after some French troops—parts of the VIIth Corps (Douay)—had come up at half-past five at La Besace and Raucourt, and the 1st Bavarian Corps from the east, and the Vth Corps from the south had advanced against them, they retired northwards, pursued by the fire of the Bavarians. The Third Army, although not engaged in fighting on the 30th of August, had still rendered conspicuous service. It had marched 5 miles (= 25 Engl. miles) without cooking, and the men, who in the five days preceding had in long columns marched long distances upon bad mountainous roads, remained still in good spirits,—the enemy, signs of whose internal dissolution were already perceptible, had given way on every point.

EVENTS OF THE 31ST OF AUGUST.—FIGHT AT DOUZY.

The order issued by Supreme Command on the 30th of August at 11 o'clock at night, prescribed for the 31st the continuation of the present movements. Wherever the enemy posted himself on the hither side of the Maas he was to be attacked and crowded up in the space between the river and the Belgian frontiers. It was the task of the Army of the Maas to prevent the enemy's left wing from escaping towards the east, whilst the Third Army was to turn against his front and flank.

At 6 o'clock in the morning the Third Army started on its march for the following places of destination: the Württemberg Division for Boutaucourt and the Maas; the XIth Corps for Donchery; the 1st Bavarian Corps for Remilly; the IInd Bavarian Corps for Raucourt, the VIth Corps for Attigny and the surrounding country; the Vth Corps for Chémery; the 4th Cavalry Division for the Maas; the 6th Cavalry Division to take the direction upon Mézières; the main body of the 5th Cavalry Division was to remain at Tourteron, and the 2nd to move to the rear of the Vth Corps. The troops were instructed to pursue the enemy beyond the Belgian frontier, in case he should cross over and not be immediately disarmed.

As early as 5 o'clock in the morning the 4th Cavalry Division started in a dense fog by Raucourt and Remilly in pursuit of the enemy. Small parties of the French, mostly stragglers, were driven upon Sedan or made prisoners, and the country west of the Maas at Frénois and Wadelincourt was passed through by the cavalry. Lieutenant von Horn of the 2nd Hussars of the Life Guards audaciously riding forward in the fog, suddenly found himself before the gate of a fortress—it was that of Sedan; with quick resolve he pretended to be the bearer of a flag of truce, demanding the surrender of the place; he was refused admittance, as also was an officer afterwards sent by the commander of the division. But it was now clear that there was no enemy to the left of the Maas. The division had steadily ridden on at a trot. At

half-past six the regiment of hussars had arrived at Wadelincourt. The nearness of the fortress, and a feeble fire from the right bank of the Maas, but, above all, the fog, were reasons for halting and waiting till the air should have cleared, as it was expected soon to do, since the sun had risen. By 9 o'clock the division was able to continue its ride west of Sedan. Within range of the fortress from the heights of Wadelincourt they could see to the right into the valley of the River Maas, which here winds very considerably. Out of the mist, which gradually sank lower beneath the sun, were seen to rise in the valley of the Maas, the steeples of Balan, Sedan and Donchery; here and there the steam from railway-engines in motion broke in white strips through the layer of fog. On the heights beyond Sedan were seen extensive camps of troops of all arms—"a whole army seemed to rest there".

Towards 10 o'clock the horse-artillery of the division opened fire from Frénois, against the railway line in the valley of the Maas, where till then the regular traffic had not been interrupted. Half an hour afterwards the division assembled at Villers-sur-Bar, Donchery having also been found unoccupied. Patrols sent out on the great highway in the direction of Flize encountered hostile bodies of infantry in close formation, belonging to Vinoy's corps; these offered resistance to our further advance, and only fell back upon Mézières, when the heads of the Württemberg Division appeared and joined in the fight.

The 5th and 6th Cavalry Divisions and further to the rear the VIth Corps had been ordered to cover on the 31st the left flank of the Third Army. Whilst the 6th Division, advancing beyond Poix, compelled by its shells a hostile battalion (of the XIIIth Corps) at Yvernaumont to retire upon Mézières, the 5th reached the line of railway between Rethel and Poix, and the Brunswick Hussars pushed forward past Attigny towards Reims. The advanced guard of the XIth Corps reached Donchery at midday and established itself there; to the west of the place a trestle bridge was made over the Maas. The corps camped between Donchery and Cheveuges; south of it was the Vth Corps, brought here from Chémery.

On the extreme right wing of the Third Army no serious engagements with the enemy had taken place early in the morning, except at Remilly, the enemy marching in long lines from Douzy to Bazeilles. Thither also the 1st Bavarian Corps was marching. When their vanguard reached Remilly, fire was opened upon them from the right bank of the Maas. It was replied to by the 2nd Battalion of Jägers and the artillery of the advanced guard, whereupon this column of the enemy turned aside in a northerly



GENERAL V. SCHLOTHEIM.

(Chief of the General Staff of the Army of the Maas.)

direction, and in their place a strong line of artillery came into action; nevertheless the Bavarian batteries succeeded in driving back upon Bazeilles some disconnected bodies of the French, who had approached up to the right bank of the Maas. Meanwhile the corps had come up at Allicourt and Remilly and had sent the 9th Battalion of Jägers forwards towards the bridge. To get there these brave riflemen had to climb down the steep declivity, but still were in time to reach on the bridge 9 barrels of gunpowder with a conducting line, at the other end of which some French soldiers were just on the point of setting light to the match. The conducting line was hewn in two and the bridge was saved.

Parts of the 4th and 9th Battalions of Jägers, without waiting for orders, pressed forward upon Bazeilles and north of it, where they kept up a musketry contest for two hours against a greatly superior enemy. General von der Tann having no intention of crossing the river, the Jägers received no support and were compelled at half-past three again to leave the place. On this occasion several wounded men were left on the open field between the village and the railway bridge. Second-Jäger Steinberger, two privates and two bearers volunteered to bring them in, amidst fierce firing of the enemy; the latter men fell, but the wounded were brought across the bridge to the collecting station.

After the pontoon-train had arrived at Remilly at half-past two, two trestle bridges were thrown across from Allicourt, under cover of six batteries planted on the heights south of the place. Had an attack been made by the enemy upon the Bavarians, it could, after the arrival on the spot of four batteries of the IIInd Corps, have been met by no less than 100 guns. But this did not take place, although the XIIth Corps of the French was drawn up on a line from Balan, through Bazeilles, to La Petite-Moncelle. The corps of Von der Tann lost in this engagement 9 officers and 133 men; it camped that night at Angécourt and Remilly.

On the 31st of August the Crown Prince of Prussia betook himself from the height at Stonne, whence there was an extensive view of the country, to Chémery. The King¹ also came to Chémery, and, with his Staff, General von Moltke; the latter said to Lieutenant-General von Blumenthal, Chief of the General Staff of the Third Army, that, according to the reports received, the French army was still standing round Sedan, and then he added: "Now we have got them in the trap, and to-morrow we must cross over the Maas early in the morning."

On the 31st of August the Army of the Maas was to advance with 2 corps and 2 cavalry divisions, between the Chiers and the Maas, upon Carignan and Mouzon. The Guards and the XIIth Corps with their cavalry divisions were detailed for this; the latter crossed the Maas at 8 o'clock in the morning and took the direction of Carignan and Vaux, Major-General Senfft von Pilsach having previously early in the morning, ridden as far as Mouzon with a squadron of the 18th Uhlans. On the way thither he took 100 prisoners and 60 loaded vehicles. The place itself was not occupied, and in it numerous stragglers surrendered without any resistance to the General, who was accompanied by only one officer and four uhlans. The 12th Cavalry Division started at 9 o'clock from Pouilly and moved in the direction of Carignan, through Moulins, as far as Vaux. On the way they saw the tents of several French camps; scattered about

¹ W. v. Hahnke: "The Operations of the Third Army." Berlin 1873, p. 142.

lay everything that an army would carry: arms, ammunition, clothing, provisions and material of every kind. Some marauders were picked up, and large quantities of finely flavoured French ration biscuits were found, which came in very handy in provisioning the troops. On the height north-east of Vaux the division halted, and its battery opened fire against the French columns on march, who were moving to the rear in a northerly direction from Carignan. The railway station, which was seen to be actively astir, was also bombarded.

Meanwhile report had been made to the division, that, from the heights at Amblimont, long trains of waggons were seen in movement on the road leading on to the further bank of the river, but that Douzy was apparently still held by the enemy. General Count zur Lippe therefore turned to the Chiers, further down, and sent against the place the 23rd Brigade of Cavalry under the command of Major-General Krug von Nidda. The 17th Regiment of Uhlans leading, the brigade trotted past Amblimont and Mairy to Douzy. The 1st squadron was met by the fire of the infantry, and was therefore led back at a walk, with lances at the carry. It required the shells of the horse battery, which had taken up position on the hill east of Mairy, to get the place evacuated. Now the regiment of uhlans once more advanced, the 1st squadron on the road to Carignan, the 2nd against a column of vehicles which was seen to the north on the road to Rubécourt, and the two other squadrons followed in the centre. The escort of the column of vehicles, two companies of the 27th French Regiment of the Line had meanwhile taken up their position on a hill covered with bushes. Two troops galloped up against the line of waggons, and the 3rd and 4th squadrons turned against the enemy's infantry. They approached pretty near without being fired upon. The first volley, of which not a single bullet hit, was fired at a distance of 500 paces. Now the cavalry immediately charged. Captain Baron von Friesen rushed with the 3rd squadron straight upon the enemy, and the 4th squadron directed its attack against the enemy's right flank. In the hand-to-hand fight which ensued, Lieutenant von der Decken met a hero's death; Colonel von Miltitz, the commander of the regiment, and his Adjutant, who had taken part in the charge, were both wounded. After a short but fierce contest the enemy retreated upon the hills to the north, whence he kept up a hot fire against the uhlans. These were now re-formed and led back to Douzy.

The 2nd squadron, ordered to cover the left flank, overtook fugitive infantry and took them prisoners. A troop of the 4th squadron overtook the line of waggons and caused there a great panic, but the waggons were only stopped and could not be brought back. The 1st squadron also, riding forward on the road to Carignan, lighted upon a transport column which had been abandoned by its escort. No resistance was offered here, and a troop was sent off in the direction of Pouru-St. Remy, but it had to be recalled owing to the infantry fire directed against it from a small wood.

Strong masses of the enemy making their appearance on the grounds south-east of Francheval made a further advance of the regiment of uhlans impracticable, and therefore the squadrons assembled south of Douzy. The fight began at $\frac{1}{4}$ past 2 in the afternoon and ended at half-past 3. Our losses were 3 officers and 5 men killed and wounded; one uhlan, who had fallen down with his horse, was made prisoner. The enemy lost 40 men killed and wounded and 10 prisoners.

In accordance with the orders of the Crown Prince of Saxony the 1st Infantry

Division of the Guards crossed the Chiers on the 31st of August at Linay and reached Pouru-St. Remy, putting out a line of outposts from Pouru-aux-Bois to the Belgian frontier at Grand-Haye; the 2nd reached Sachy. The XIIth Corps stood with the 24th Division on the left bank of the Chiers, by Douzy; and the 23rd east of Lombut. The IVth Corps remained at Mouzon, and collected great quantities of war-material on the battle-field of the 30th of August. At Carignan remains were found of camps that had just been forsaken; a train of provisions left behind was captured at the railway station; it sufficed to supply the Corps of Guards for 8 days.

In the night of the 30th and up to midday of the 31st the concentration of the Army of Châlons was effected at Sedan, covered by the 1st Corps, placed on the northern bank of the Chiers. General Vinoy, who had arrived on the 30th at Mézières with a division of the newly formed XIIIth Army Corps, had been informed that the army



GENERAL FELIX DOUAY.

was coming there and that he should assemble his troops at that place. The Emperor Napoleon and MacMahon thought that they would be able to lead the army to Mézières, but at a council of war held at Sedan on the afternoon of the 31st, no final decision was arrived at. Meanwhile the army corps had occupied the positions assigned to them, and there stood on the evening of the 31st of August: the 7th Corps facing north, between Floing and the Calvaire d'Illy; west of Floing Bonnemains' Cavalry Division; on the heights by Balan and La Moncelle the XIIth Corps, one brigade of which was advanced towards Bazeilles; the 1st Corps fronting east on the heights west of the valley of the Givonne; the Vth Corps, the command of which General of Division von Wimpffen^{*} had assumed on the 31st, in the old camp north-east of the fortress; and Margueritte's Cavalry Division at Illy. Thus the French position formed a triangle, having an

area of little more than $\frac{1}{4}$ square mile (= abt. 6 Engl. square miles), its sides being less than 1 mile (= less than 5 Engl. miles).

It is difficult to answer the question whether Marshal MacMahon could possibly have rescued the Army of Châlons from the threatened envelopment. The retreat upon Mézières offered small prospect of success on the 31st of August and in the early morning hours of the 1st of September. Probably the Vth and VIIth Corps were, on the 31st, scarcely capable of moving; the XIIth was held fast at Bazeilles by the Bavarians, so that it is probable that only parts of the 1st Corps and of the cavalry divisions could have reached their destination. To continue the offensive towards the east or south was impracticable; in both places superior forces would have been encountered, and

^{*} This distinguished French General with a German name is descended from an ancient Suabian family, branches of which are settled in Austria, Prussia, Württemberg, France and Denmark. [*Trs.*]

to cross the Belgian frontier would have brought the Germans in pursuit. An order found on the battlefield ran: "Rest to-day for the whole army."

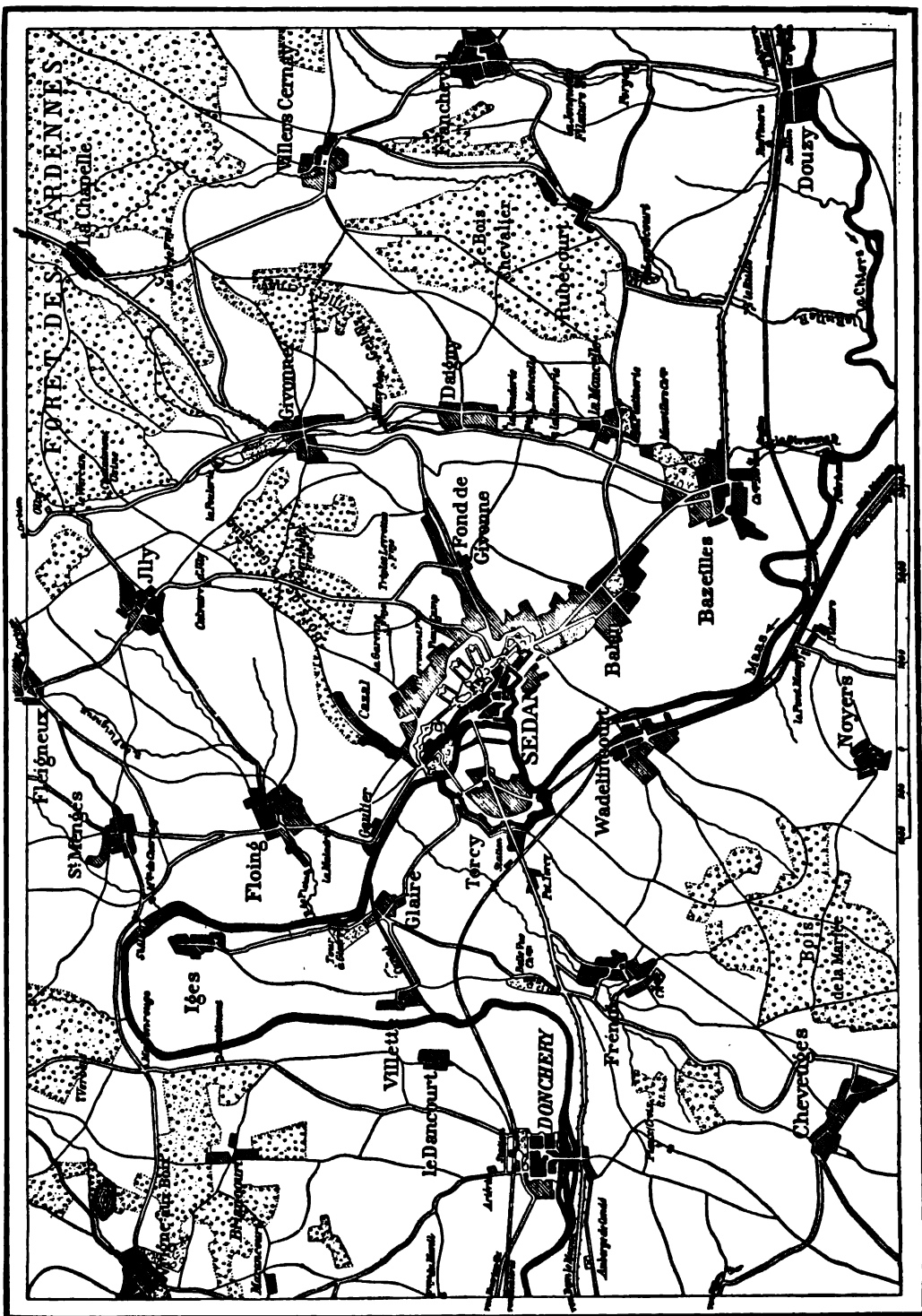
The Crown Prince of Saxony too intended to give his army a day of rest on the 1st of September, if the enemy did not attack him. The Army of the Maas had had nine days of incessant marching, and a great number of the men had by these over-exertions become temporarily non-effective. And yet—this 1st of September, instead of the longed-for rest, brought the decisive battle.

The work published by the General Staff describes the state of affairs as follows: "On the evening of the 31st August the two armies stood close against one another along their whole front, parts of the advanced troops were directly in contact. The French plan to relieve Metz, boldly conceived but inadequately prepared and hesitatingly executed, had been wrecked by the rapid action of the German Commanders and by the, in some cases, extraordinary marching performances of the German troops, and the Army of Châlons now stood assembled round the small and insignificant fortress of Sedan, on a curve facing east, south and west. It seems that the French Commanders still failed clearly to understand the hopelessness of their position, their only choice even then being to immediately cross the Belgian frontier, or to sacrifice the greater part of their forces, and so perhaps succeed in leading back the rest by the road through Mézières into the interior of the country."

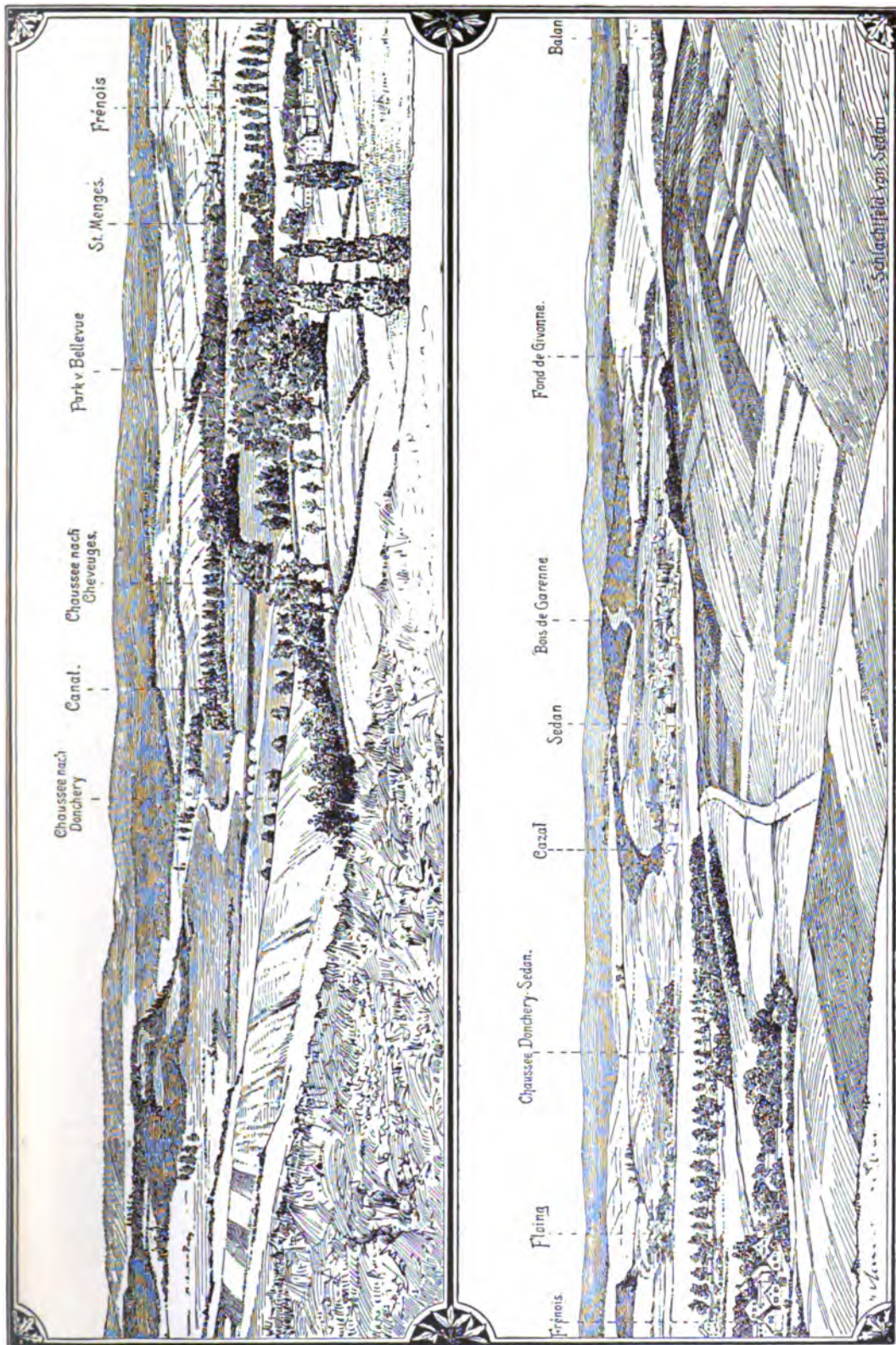
"The French standing thus narrowly crowded together with the frontier of their country at their rear, were facing a victorious and superior German army formed on a broad front. On the east and south-east the Crown Prince of Saxony blocked the small space between the Maas and the Belgian frontier with two army corps and two divisions of cavalry, on both banks of the Chiers; and the IVth Corps as reserve at Mouzon. On the south the Crown Prince of Prussia stood between the Maas and the Bar, with four army corps and two divisions of cavalry, ready to repel any advance of the French, or to cross the river by the four bridges in his possession and fall, with his left wing, upon the enemy's flank, should he try to escape westwards. In this latter case the Württembergers and the 6th Cavalry Division standing between the river Bar and the Rethel railway, could also immediately coöperate. And, finally, there stood, separated from the main front of the Germans and at some distance behind the extreme left wing of the Third Army, two bodies of troops: the 5th Division of Cavalry at Tourteron and the VIth Army Corps at Attigny. From these points they could both make a timely opposition to all the attempts of the enemy in rear of that army, and cut off the retreat of the French troops at Mézières upon Reims and Paris."

THE BATTLE OF SEDAN.

East and north of the small fortress of Sedan lies the tract of country where the fate of the Army of Châlons was to be decided on the 1st of September. Sedan is commanded all round by heights, which attain their greatest elevation in the Calvaire d'Illy. Here the two fronts of the French army, one facing south-east and the other north-west, were joined. In front of these two positions flow the rivers Givonne and Floing, forming favourable lines of defence. The water-courses, which in some parts are deeply scooped out, can be crossed by troops only along the roads and over bridges. The declivities from the plateau north-east of the fortress slope away



SEDAN.



THE BATTLEFIELD OF SEDAN (FROM THE HEIGHTS BEHIND FRÉNOIS).
(After a sketch by A. von Werner.)

towards the east and north-west almost like *glacis*, but towards Givonne they fall too steeply. South of the Calvaire d'Illy lies a good-sized wood, the Bois-de-la-Garenne, which with numerous ravines and depressions formed convenient places for cover and concealment of troops. Towards the south and the west the French Lines were protected by the Maas, the valley of which had been flooded from Sedan to Bazeilles by damming the waters. Among the villages on the battle-field, Bazeilles attained special importance. It had stone houses, broad streets and several large buildings surrounded by park-land very suitable for defence.

The country occupied by the Army of Châlons, attractive as a landscape, was well fitted by local circumstances for an obstinate defence, but the position laboured under the disadvantage, due to its slight depth and to the possibility of its being surrounded, that it was exposed to the effects of cross-fire, and that the army might be crowded up in a narrow space.

The German Commander-in-Chief issued no General Order for the battle of the 1st of September. The instructions issued at 11 o'clock at night on the 30th of August, and which have been already mentioned, were considered sufficient. On the evening of the 31st, however, the Crown Prince of Prussia received a letter from General von Moltke, pointing out the desirability of pushing forward a force across the Maas that very night, to stand with deployed front on the road to Mézières, and be ready for an attack at daybreak.

The instructions given for the 1st of September by the Commander-in-Chief of the Third Army originally were: that the XIth and Vth Corps should march at dawn from Donchéry to Vrigne-aux-Bois; that the Württemberg Division should take up a position on the Sedan-Mézières road, facing Mézières, and the IInd Bavarian Corps on the heights on the left bank of the Maas at Frénois; while the Ist Bavarian Corps should remain at Remilly. In consequence of the communication received from Moltke these dispositions were altered to the following: "The XIth and the Vth Corps and also the Württemberg Division are to throw bridges over the Maas during the night, to be able to cross the stream at daybreak." At the same time the Ist Bavarian Corps was to advance upon Bazeilles, and to detain the retreating enemy as much as possible.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Maas received intelligence of these orders in the course of the night, and it was pointed out to him that a simultaneous attack by the neighbouring army would obviously secure a more favourable result. Forthwith, at one o'clock in the morning, the Crown Prince of Saxony issued orders for the attack of the 1st of September, to the effect that one Division of the Corps of the Guards should advance upon Villers-Cernay, the other upon Francheval, and that the XIIth Corps should assemble at Douzy and advance upon La Moncelle. The IVth Corps was for the present to form a general reserve. The troops were to be alarmed at once and started upon their march.

Crown Prince Albert with his staff betook himself to the heights of Amblimont. His Majesty, King William and the Great Head Quarters had chosen a point of observation which was favourably situated on the height of Frénois and commanded a wide view over the field, whilst the Crown Prince of Prussia directed the movements of his army from the farm-house at Croix, south of Donchery.

On the French side the state of affairs was as follows: No orders had been issued for the 1st of September, Marshal MacMahon having intended to give his army some

rest, and then to lead them either back to Mézières or forward to Carignan. The mistaken view was still held, that both these roads were open and that the march upon Mézières could be carried out under all circumstances.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE BATTLE AND CONTESTS OF THE BAVARIANS
AT BAZEILLES.

Having received the instructions issued by the Commander-in-Chief of the Third Army for the 1st of September at 1 o'clock in the morning, General von der Tann determined immediately to attack in order to prevent the expected retreat of the French forces. For this purpose it was urgently necessary speedily to take Bazeilles, but owing to the darkness of the night an artillery preparation for the assault was not practicable. The night passed quietly. At half-past two in the morning General von der Tann arrived with his staff at Allicourt. A dense fog rested over the valley when at 4 o'clock the 1st Division began to cross the river simultaneously by the railway-bridge, and by the two pontoon-bridges that had been thrown across on the previous day. The 3rd Brigade was intended to follow, but the 4th Brigade was for the time to remain in reserve on the left bank.

Beyond the Maas deep silence prevailed. The outskirts of and entrances to Bazeilles were unoccupied, and the leading companies entered with loud hurrahs. The garrison—a brigade of marines of the XIIth Corps, the best troops of the Army of Châlons—was taken entirely by surprise, but immediately opened upon the troops which had effected an entrance a destructive fire from front, flank and rear; the beginning of a fluctuating street-fight lasting six hours, carried on by the French with tenacious valour and perseverance. At 7 o'clock not half the place was taken, and already the enemy was receiving reinforcements; but at the same time the artillery on the left bank was able to open fire upon the columns that made their appearance north-east of Bazeilles. Now the 4th Brigade also joined in, but effected no change in the difficult state of the fight. Some of the larger buildings, *e. g.* the Villa Beurmann at the north-eastern exit, were fought for with an absolutely desperate valour. The attempts too to make use of artillery in the place failed, although the employment of this weapon in the fight was very desirable. A section of the 3rd four-pounder Battery, under Senior-Lieutenant Fricker was ordered up, and bombarded a few strongly occupied buildings, but had soon to retreat, because in a few minutes most of the gunners were struck down by the withering musketry fire of the enemy. Our losses were largely increased by the batteries of artillery and mitrailleuses which were planted upon the heights north of Bazeilles, and poured a hail of projectiles upon the village and upon the country east of La Moncelle, where meanwhile the 48th Brigade of Saxon Infantry had joined the Bavarian troops. Our troops, some of whom had spent all their ammunition, received reinforcements, but failed, for all that, to reach that part of Bazeilles which is turned towards Balan. Already the brave Bavarians had been forced to leave the southern part of Bazeilles, when three fresh battalions of the 4th Brigade arrived, and finally drove back the defenders to Balan and to the northern heights. At last the 3rd battalion of the 10th Regiment and part of the 13th took the Villa Beurmann by assault and made the garrison prisoners. The troops of the enemy, especially the marines, had done their duty to the full. Not until shortly after 10 o'clock

was Bazeilles in the hands of the 1st Corps of the Bavarians, 15½ of whose battalions had been engaged in the conflict inside the village.

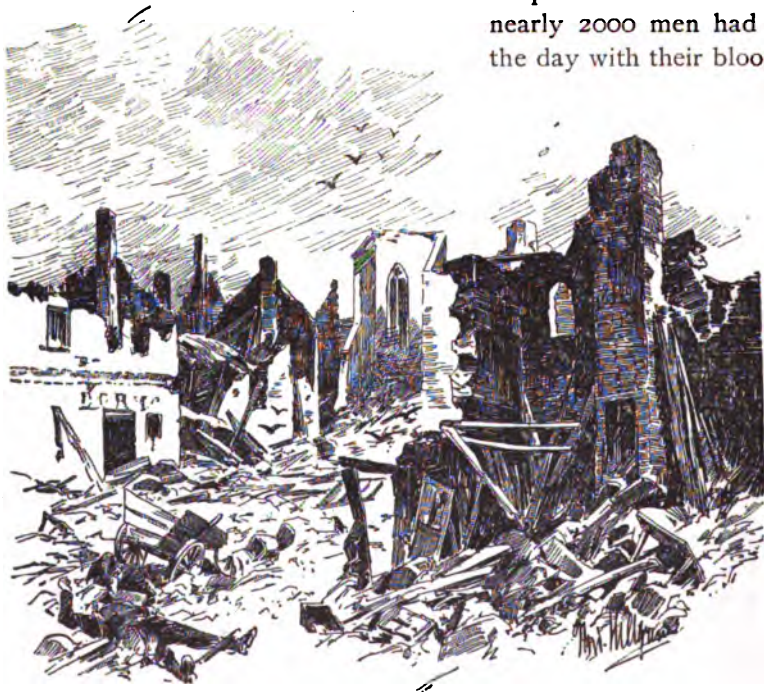
Whilst these contests were in progress the troops placed south of Bazeilles had seized and occupied the heights of La Moncelle. The officer in command, General von der Tann, now made the needful arrangements to retain, come what might, the ground that had been purchased so dearly. Five batteries crowned these heights; the 8th Division of the IVth Corps also arrived there, the Saxon 23rd Division and the 48th Brigade of Infantry having been ordered to move towards Dagny.

The 1st and 4th Brigades having occupied Bazeilles, with the 2nd at their rear as reserve, the contest was now continued by their artillery only, till the 3rd Division arrived on the battle-field. It was ordered to advance in the valley against Balan and the neighbouring heights. This again led to a fierce conflict, in which 78 pieces of artillery of the Bavarian and of the IVth Corps were engaged. At first the issue seemed doubtful, and accordingly the 1st Bavarian Brigade was also ordered to advance upon Balan, but in vain. The Bavarian battalions had to give way before an energetic counter-attack of the enemy, who endeavoured to break through at that place. Of course the French on their side could not get beyond Balan, and a little after 5 o'clock in the afternoon we succeeded in again occupying the village. General von Dietl with some detached parties of troops got as far as the gate of the fortress of Sedan, where meanwhile the white flag had been hoisted.

Towards half-past 5 the firing on this part of the battle-field ceased. The 1st Bavarian Corps encamped on the bloodily conquered ground; it had been under fire three days in succession, and might justly be proud of its achievements. 121 officers and nearly 2000 men had purchased the honour of the day with their blood or their lives. A simple

monument on the way from Villa Beurmann to La Moncelle now testifies to the valour evinced by the Bavarians on the 1st of September, 1870. "Here rest 500 brave Bavarians"; so runs the short, significant inscription.

During the combat of the 1st Bavarian Corps the IInd had been marching since 4 o'clock in the morning, from Raucourt to the position south of Sedan, which had been assigned to it. At 8 o'clock its reserve artillery, hastening on



BAZEILLES AFTER THE FIGHT.

at the trot, had reached Frénois, unlimbered on the heights east of that village, and at 9 o'clock opened fire against the fortress and against the bodies of troops stationed to the north of it. The same destination was assigned to the batteries of the 3rd and 4th Divisions, which subsequently arrived on the ground south of the Maas. The duty of protecting this extensive line of artillery was first undertaken by portions of the 3rd Division, and after that had been removed to Bazeilles, by portions of the 4th Division. But it became more and more evident that it was impossible here to produce a decisive result. A few more batteries having come up after 10 o'clock, north of the Château Bellevue, the firing on this side was stopped at 3 o'clock by superior orders, but renewed at 4 o'clock. The town of Sedan, vigorously bombarded with incendiary and other shells, was set ablaze in ten different places. Not till negotiations were opened did the mass



of the "Great Bavarian Battery", united between Frénois and Vadelincourt, cease firing. Of the IInd Bavarian Corps only the 3rd Division had suffered considerable losses, viz., 87 officers and 1829 rank and file; the other units only lost in killed, wounded and missing, 6 officers and 70 rank and file.

ENGAGEMENT OF THE XIITH (ROYAL SAXON) ARMY CORPS.

At half-past three in the morning His Royal Highness Prince George had received his orders from the Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Maas, and he immediately ordered his corps to assemble at Douzy; but without waiting for their arrival, special haste being considered imperative, the 24th Division of Infantry, which was at Douzy, had been started on the march with an advanced guard at 5 o'clock. This division moved rapidly past Lamécourt to the village of La Moncelle, situated in the valley

of the brook Givonne, and arrived there at 6 o'clock. The object was to overtake and detain the enemy, whose departure for Mézières was taken for granted. Opposed to the Germans was the right wing of the 1st Corps (Ducrot) from Givonne as far as La Moncelle, and the XIIth Corps (Lebrun) between La Moncelle and Bazeilles. Both corps had occupied the villages situated in the bottom of the valley, whilst their artillery crowned the heights in favourable positions.

La Moncelle was taken after a short contest, by the 107th Regiment. The enemy offered a more resolute resistance in two houses situated on the main road, on the right bank of the brook, not far from the bridge. In a rapid, bold onset the 11th and 12th companies forced the passage, took the houses and held them against the repeated counter-attacks of the enemy. The 1st battalion had meanwhile become hotly engaged in a fight upon the heights towards Dagny, and had established communication on the left with the 3rd Bavarian Brigade.

At the same time as the Saxon infantry made a forced entry into La Moncelle, the battery of the advanced guard had taken up a position on the road from Lamécourt, and had opened fire against the long lines of the enemy on the opposite heights. Its right flank was covered by the 105th Regiment, which at half-past six moved into the fighting line. The battery was soon bombarded by five French batteries, but stood its ground firmly and undauntedly, till a reinforcement from the 24th Division coming up at a trot, brought relief.

Meanwhile the two French Divisions of Lartigue and Lacratelle pushed forward to the eastern bank of the Givonne near Dagny. Strong bodies of skirmishers and some batteries of mitrailleuses broke forth out of the village and overwhelmed the country with a hail of bullets. Now the Saxon batteries, which were hurling shrapnel and case-shot against the enemy's lines, had to fall back, but speedily resumed their former positions, after the 12th Battalion of Jägers had repulsed the enemy with a rapid fire and the 13th Battalion had fallen on his flank. The latter battalion took on this occasion two mitrailleuses and one piece of artillery, and the 6th and 7th Regiments also captured two of the enemy's guns.

The vanguard, which was standing its ground amidst heavy losses, now received support. In accordance with the orders of the general in command, the corps-artillery was coming up at a trot, and the 3rd Field Division¹ took up a position east of La Moncelle and bombarded the artillery facing it, and the infantry where visible. Lieutenant-Colonel Funcke, commander of the corps-artillery and Major-General von Schulz in command of the advanced guard were both wounded by chassepot bullets, still the 3rd Field Division of Field Artillery, supported by two Bavarian batteries and by the 4th Field Division that had just come up, succeeded in compelling the enemy's artillery to make a retrograde movement.

On the right wing of the line of artillery, now consisting of 13 batteries, the 104th Regiment also arrived, at about $\frac{1}{4}$ past 8, and being joined by portions of the 105th and 107th Regiments and of the 13th Battalion of Jägers, made an attack upon Dagny, led on by Colonel von Elterlein. They succeeded in forcing an entry, and gaining, in a fierce struggle with Zouaves and Turkos, a firm footing in the trough of the valley. In a hand-to-hand fight a standard of the Turkos was captured.

¹ Four batteries of the 12th Artillery Regiment. [*Trs.*]

On the left wing of the Saxon line of battle the 46th Brigade of Infantry and the 102nd Regiment were now under fire. They were intended to fill the gap between Bazeilles and La Moncelle. The brigade arrived in front of Bazeilles after 9 o'clock, just as the enemy was preparing to make a fresh assault, and, together with such of the Bavarians as were on the spot, advanced to meet him; bravely fighting, he was driven out of the park and the kitchen-gardens of the Château Montvillers towards the edge of the heights of Balan. When, then, at about 10 o'clock, two battalions of rifles of the 45th Brigade, part of the main reserve drawn up at La Rulle, had arrived, the valley at La Moncelle was wholly in our possession. Parts of the 46th Brigade and the 7th and 8th companies of the 107th Regiment joined in the Bavarian attack upon the heights west of La Moncelle, compelling the enemy, after repeated counter-attacks, to fall back upon Balan.

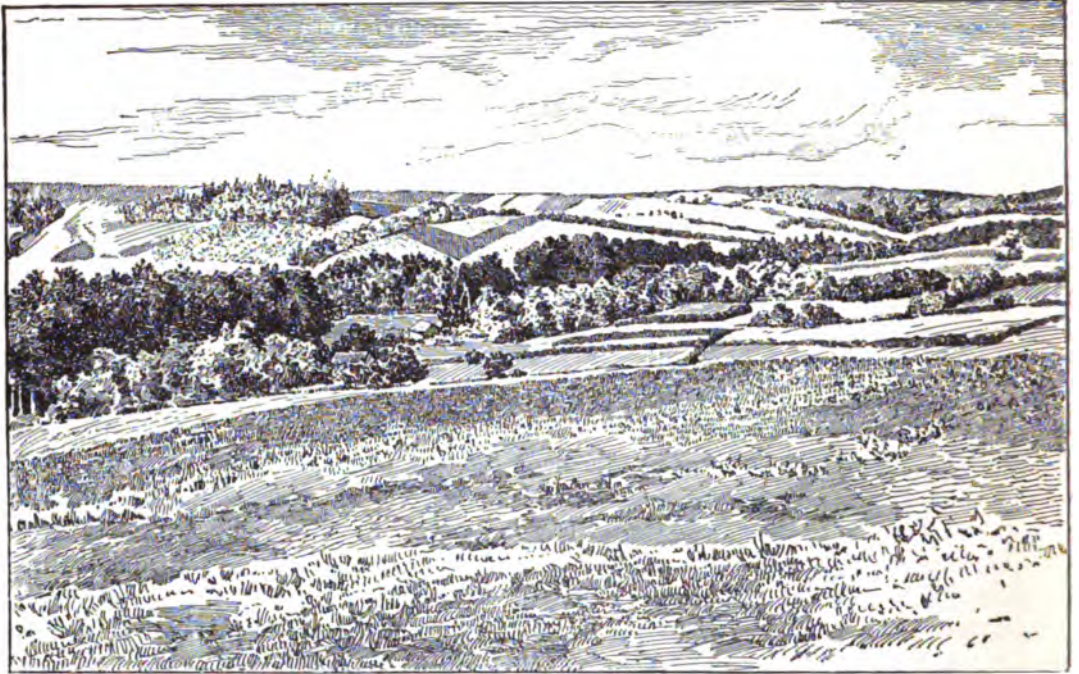
Crown Prince Albert had given orders before 8 o'clock in the morning, that as soon as the Givonne valley was in our possession the XIIth Corps was to advance past Illy to the ridge of heights near Givonne, in order, jointly with the Guards Corps, to surround the enemy completely and cut off his escape into Belgian territory. At the same time the 1st Bavarian Corps had received orders to cover this movement on its left flank by taking possession of the Bois-de-Garenne. But the Bavarian Corps had suffered heavy losses in a six hours' fight, and had for the time to be left where it was; accordingly, when the flank march was begun at $\frac{1}{4}$ past twelve, its protection was entrusted to parts of the 23rd Division, sent forward to the western edge of the valley. The 6th company of the Regiment of Rifles succeeded in taking two guns on that occasion. The march of the division to Daigny was made by the road on the west side of the valley; high overhead the shots of the two opposing lines of artillery crossed in the air. But suddenly the enemy burst forth from the line of the heights, with closed battalions and batteries, towards the valley of the Givonne, and now in the narrow space between Daigny, Haybes and Fond-de-Givonne new conflicts arose, in the course of which the Saxon Grenadiers, supported by part of the Emperor Francis' Regiment, pushed forward as far as Fond-de-Givonne, but it was at first not possible to hold this village. Previously First-Lieutenant Kirchhoff had, with the 1st company of the Grenadiers of the Guards, taken by assault a small entrenchment west of Haybes, defended by infantry with two mitrailleuses. Firm foothold having been gained on the heights west of Daigny, the Corps Artillery took up its position there, whereby the line of artillery firing from Bazeilles as far as north-east of Fond-de-Givonne was increased so as to number 21 batteries.

The movement northward, which had already been in progress, was now stopped, as the retreat of the French upon Sedan no longer rendered it necessary. At 4 o'clock in the afternoon the Saxon Corps stood with the 45th Brigade of Infantry and eleven batteries on the ridge west of Haybes and Daigny, with the 46th at Givonne and with the 24th Division at Daigny. This portion of the battle-field presented a frightful scene of desolation; the ground ploughed up by artillery was thickly strewn with dead and wounded, most of whom had been laid low by the shells of the artillery of the guards.

At about $\frac{1}{4}$ past 4 the struggle was renewed in front of the Saxon line. At the same time that the French made their last attempt to break through at Balan and Bazeilles, Lespart's Division of the Vth Corps had turned against the heights of Daigny

and La Moncelle. The advancing masses, who refrained from firing, were at first not recognized as enemies, till an officer of the General Staff, who hurried forward towards them, was fired upon. To meet this new attack the 45th Brigade of Infantry deployed, and assisted by the Saxon batteries and a few batteries of the Guards, they repulsed the French in a half-hour's fight.

Not till sunset did the 23rd Division bivouac at Givonne, whilst the 24th, covered by outposts, was encamped at Daigny and the Bois-Chevalier, connecting on the left with the IVth Corps. The Cavalry Division, for which no employment was found on



THEATRE OF ATTACK OF THE GUARDS.
(After a contemporary sketch by Emelé.)

the battle-field, had remained in constant readiness the whole day between Mairy and Amblimont.

The Saxon Corps had suffered a loss of 62 officers and 1365 rank and file, but had taken a prominent part in the decisive struggle. Two thousand Frenchmen were made prisoners, and eleven guns and one standard were captured. The fifteen batteries had fired 7324 shots, of which the 3rd and 5th Heavy Batteries had fired 757 and 781 shots respectively.

ENGAGEMENT AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE CORPS OF GUARDS.

The troops were alarmed immediately after the arrival of the order from the Headquarters of the Army of the Maas, and at half-past four the 1st Infantry Division started off in the direction of Villers-Cernay, the 2nd Infantry Division and the Corps Artillery

starting at the same time in that of Francheval. Soon heavy firing of artillery was heard from the west, and it became clear that speedy help must be wanted. The Corps Artillery trotted on ahead of the main body of the 2nd Division of the Guards, in order to join in the fight as soon as possible. The troops, urged on at the top of their speed, were only able to traverse the brook Rulle at a single crossing at Villers-Cernay. When the advanced guard had driven off from the field some small bodies of the enemy's advanced troops, the batteries of the 1st Division and the Corps Artillery which had been rapidly pushed forward, opened fire at $\frac{1}{4}$ to 9 from the heights east of Givonne against the opposite edge of the valley, which was strongly held by artillery.

The 2nd (field-artillery) Field Division of the Corps Artillery had come the whole distance of about ten English miles at a swinging trot. The commander of the Corps Artillery, Colonel von Scherbening, hastened on far in front of his batteries in order to assign their positions to them, he had just reached the heights between Villers-Cernay and Givonne and said to his adjutant: "A wide field lies before us on which to gather laurels," when he was struck by one of the enemy's shells and fell from his horse. The Colonel, whose eyes flashed when he went to battle, thus found the most noble soldier's death.¹

During the two hours' artillery combat which now began, and in which the batteries of the Guards gradually established a complete superiority, the advanced guard of the 1st Division had, after a short fight, occupied the western portion of Givonne, and its main body, together with the 2nd Division, had taken up their position under cover behind the woods on the heights. "Here the regiments were wholly untroubled by the fire of the enemy, and they had piled arms. The men abandoned themselves to most unrestrained merriment; the bands played and the soldiers sang gleefully, whilst the battle was raging in front."

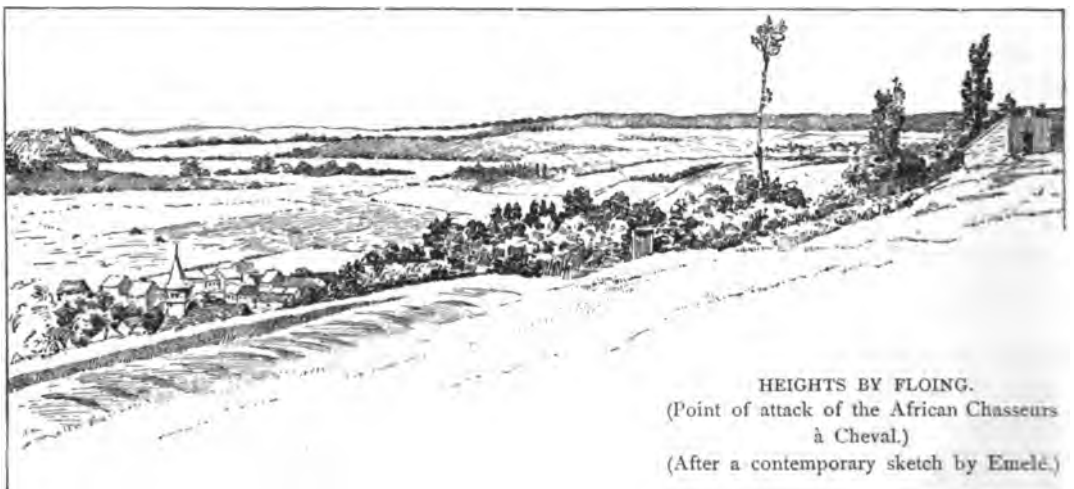
The Corps of the Guards had also received orders from Head-Quarters to advance in the direction of Fleigneux in order to drive the enemy back from the Belgian frontier. But before this could be carried out, the battle in front had to be decided. The 2nd Division of the Guards was first sent against the north-eastern part of Daigny, where superior hostile forces were engaged with the XIIth Corps. Not till the enemy had been driven back upon the opposite edge of the valley could the batteries of the Guards, united in two great groups, occupy the heights immediately to the east of Givonne. From here 84 pieces hurled their deadly shells, whilst single companies reached the bottom of the valley and established themselves there securely. Meanwhile the 6th company of the Fusiliers of the Guards had won a short but brilliant fight. Detailed to cover the extreme right wing of the first artillery position, it received orders to take the village of La Chapelle, which the Guards' cavalry-division had found occupied. The battery on the flank wheeled off to the right and opened fire upon the village; one section remained with the artillery and the rest hurled itself upon Chapelle. The battalion of Franks-tireurs from Paris evacuated the place and retired to the north-west. A column of artillery, entering Givonne without any precautionary measures, was encountered by the 5th company of the Fusiliers of the Guards. They formed four deep for volley firing on the square in front of the church, and after a slight resistance they took prisoners 11 officers and nearly 200 rank and file,

¹ From Major Beutner's "The Royal Prussian Artillery of the Guards." Vol. II, pp. 181 and 195.

and captured 7 cannons, 3 mitrailleuses, a great number of ammunition-waggon and 124 horses.

From their second position the batteries of the Guards poured a hail of lead and iron upon the Bois-de-la-Garenne. Here the 5th Light Battery placed upon the extreme left wing held a post of special difficulty; under a heavy musketry fire it speedily lost its three section commanders. Bodies of the enemy, intended to prepare the way for the outbreak towards Carignan, suddenly stormed forward, but they were repulsed by the overwhelmingly rapid fire of the batteries. At last, at $\frac{1}{4}$ past 2, the infantry also was able to advance towards the opposite edge of the valley and the Bois-de-la-Garenne. After an all but simultaneous salvo delivered by 60 pieces of artillery the 1st Division of the Guards entered the wood almost unopposed, and joined portions of the Vth, XIth and XIIth Corps, who, attacking the enemy from three sides, were crowding him up at the farm of Querimont. Here the Guards made more than 5000 prisoners. Towards 4 o'clock the batteries of the Guards (except the 3rd Field Division) followed across the valley of the Givonne, but only the horse-batteries found further work to do, as they took part in the bombardment of the town of Sedan from a position south of the Bois-de-la-Garenne. At about 5 o'clock the battle ceased also on this part of the field. The Corps of the Guards assembled with its main body at the Calvaire d'Illy. Only the Fusilier regiment of the Guards had suffered at all severely; it lost 11 officers and 181 rank and file; *per contra* it alone handed over as prisoners 111 officers and 8500 rank and file; and besides they captured as trophies one eagle, 17 guns, 3 mitrailleuses, and 17 ammunition-waggon. The artillery of the Guards had fired off 6003 shells.

ENGAGEMENTS ON THE NORTHERN SIDE.



At two o'clock in the morning the XIth Corps moved off from its bivouac in the direction of Donchery, for which place the Vth Corps was also set in motion at $\frac{1}{4}$ past 2. This last corps had thrown a bridge across the Maas in 40 minutes, and now three routes across the river were at our disposal, and the opposite bank was reached without any interruption. The XIth Corps advanced in three columns towards

the hilly country between Vrigne-aux-Bois and Montimont; the Vth upon Vivier, west of Vrigne, sending forward a force of cavalry over the high road from Mézières to Sedan. Meanwhile the Württemberg Division also had built a bridge at Dom-le-Mesnil and had pushed forward the 3rd Brigade towards Mézières to remain in observation. At half-past seven the Crown Prince of Prussia issued orders to the two corps to go round the curve of the Maas bulging out towards the north, and to march towards the sounds of the guns, thus getting at the enemy's rear. The XIth Corps was directed along the road to St. Menges; whilst the Vth Corps was to follow in rear of its left wing. All the columns accordingly turned towards the east, and during the following hours defiled along the road between Maison Rouge and St. Albert. ¹ Here, at last, the Hessian Hussars of the 14th Regiment encountered the enemy's patrols, who fell back upon St. Menges. The general in command of the XIth Corps, General von Gersdorff, now gave orders to attack this village and the heights just to the west of it. But the enemy soon quitted this position and deployed his VIIth Corps on the hills to the south and to the east of the village of Floing: its batteries forthwith opened fire.

Meanwhile one company of the 87th Regiment had moved forward to the knoll south of St. Menges, and two companies to the north-western part of the village of Floing. The latter succeeded in rapidly preparing two farm-houses for defence and holding their own against repeated attacks of the enemy for two hours, when support arrived. Now the batteries of the XIth Corps also took up a position on the long ridge south of St. Menges, and engaged in a duel with the artillery opposite. To protect the artillery in its somewhat exposed position some companies had placed themselves in front of and near it. Two of them, the 9th and 12th of the 87th Regiment, were pushed forward to the southern slope of the height south of Fleigneux, and were on the point of descending when masses of French cavalry charged them. It was Gallifet's Brigade, which had been rapidly led forward; it consisted of three regiments of Chasseurs d'Afrique, led by the General himself, together with some squadrons of lancers. They charged in three lines, but being received with rapid fire and shells, they had to fall back upon the Bois-de-la-Garenne.



GENERAL V. GERSDORFF.

¹ The Vth and XIth Corps in their approach from the West were here restricted to this one road, which formed a defile shut in on the south by the Maas and on the north by steep hills; the most serious obstacle, however, on the north side was a stream flowing down a deep ravine into the Maas and impassable for troops except at the bridge over which the road passes.

"Bravely led on by their chiefs," reports the French Lieutenant-Colonel Bonie, "the squadrons set off at a gallop and boldly charge, but the fierce firing of the enemy quickly destroys the 1st and 3rd Regiments, and the 4th also is unable to gain the heights. Only at the Bois-de-la-Garenne was it possible, spite of the losses suffered, to reform the Division."

Whilst the three-hours' artillery contest, in which the Prussian batteries soon gained the upper hand, was in progress, the infantry succeeded in passing through the defile at St. Albert, which the enemy kept under fire. Some battalions of the 21st Division moved past St. Menges in the directions of Fleigneux and Illy. The possession of this last village was contested for some time with varying success. In the Bois-de-Falizette the Kurmark Dragoons succeeded in making prisoners of General Brahaut, commander of the cavalry division of the Vth Corps, together with 16 officers and 89 rank and file, and they also captured numerous vehicles and horses. Some small bodies escaped across the frontier into Belgium.

Meanwhile the head of the Vth Prussian Corps also had arrived, at the farm of Champ-de-la-Grange. Between 10 and 10.30 the batteries of this corps were gradually led forward to Fleigneux and thence to the height in front of it, so that after 11 o'clock 60 guns of the Vth Corps were at work, together with the 72 guns of the XIth Corps; a mighty battery, which inflicted severe losses on the troops of the VIIth French Corps facing them. From the ground here the battle of the Army of the Maas in the heights beyond Givonne could be distinctly seen and watched. It presented a picture to the eye as magnificent as it was indelible. Over the comparatively narrow space within which the two armies were contending, hung a dense canopy of smoke, which was rent by incessant flashes of fire. The roar of the artillery, like the roll of a distant thunderstorm, overpowered the rattle of musketry and mingled with the loud clatter of the mitrailleuses.

The effect of the line of the artillery of the XIth and the Vth Corps was crushing. Several times the enemy's infantry attempted to make an attack, but in presence of the devastating fire it always faced about, and vanished into the shelter-trenches behind the heights, or in the Bois-de-la-Garenne. Columns of infantry and artillery again were massed together and endeavoured, shielded by the battle raging at Illy, to reach the mill-stream north of Givonne; but it was all in vain; the German artillery dominated also this space. All who did not turn back, but turned aside in the direction of Givonne, fell into the hands of the Prussian Guards. The German shells blocked every outlet, and at the same time annihilated the enemy's artillery. Limbers and ammunition-waggons repeatedly were blown up.

Meanwhile the two companies of the 87th Regt. at Floing had been reinforced by the 83rd Regt. and the 11th Battalion of Jägers, who succeeded in driving back the enemy. The latter now made an attack so energetic that the churchyard only could be held against it; but three battalions arriving in the nick of time, once more forced the enemy back, this time upon the heights between Floing and Cazal. During this struggle Lieutenant-General von Gersdorff, who had gone to the foremost fighting line, was, south of St. Menges, mortally wounded in the chest by a chasseur bullet. General von Schachtmeyer assumed command of the XIth Corps.

As the Vth Corps arrived on the field of battle, three of its battalions were, as already stated, placed at the disposal of the XIth Corps at Floing. Its artillery was

already partly engaged; the 17th Infantry Brigade remained for the while south of St. Menges; to the 10th Division was assigned a position behind the right wing of the line of artillery of the corps; whilst the remaining details, stationed on the hill, at the farm of Champ-de-la-Grange, formed a common reserve for the Vth and XIth Corps. A counter-attack made by the French after half-past twelve was broken by the fire of the batteries and of the infantry.

Two battalions of the 46th Regiment, the 5th Jägers, and such troops of the XIth Corps as were at Floing now climbed the remarkably steep slope of the hill adjoining the south-eastern border of Floing. The foremost troops had scarcely crowned the heights, when masses of the enemy's horse burst out. The first charge, made by two squadrons of lancers, was repulsed by the infantry. Some of the lancers galloped down the steep slope, some to Floing; there the troops that were coming up destroyed them. They were quickly followed by cuirassiers and hussars, who also broke beneath the rapid fire of the 46th Regiment, then by chasseurs-à-cheval, who advanced against the 5th Battalion of Jägers. The enemy's squadrons also turned against the 32nd Regiment, half a battalion of which had just reached the summit. Partly in loose formation and partly gathered in groups they awaited the closed body of cavalry advancing upon them, allowed them to approach near, and then overthrew them with volleys and with rapid firing. Only a few succeeded in breaking through the thin firing line, and merely to succumb to the closed companies, that were coming up.

The batteries too and the Prussian cavalry here joined in the conflict. The eight pieces of artillery that First-Lieutenant von Bardeleben had just led forward in the direction of Cazal, awaited the advancing cavalry till they came within the most effective range for case-shot, to strike them with all the more deadly effect.

Besides General Margueritte, Generals Girard and Tilliard had fallen, and General de Salignac-Fénelon was wounded. The squadrons, who had fought bravely and impetuously, had lost half their men, and retreated upon the Bois-de-la-Garenne. Although completely unsuccessful, still the French cavalry may be proud of the vigour and devotion it displayed on the day of Sedan, and which was appreciated even by their antagonists. King William himself, who was able to observe these heroic charges from his station, expressed himself in a like sense.

A combatant of the 32nd Regiment, in his reminiscences of the war, describes this cavalry action graphically, as follows: "There was something imposing in the calm of our firing lines facing the mighty rush of these masses of cavalry. Now the first squadrons had already come near. 'Steady,' commanded the officers, 'don't fire.' Now they were quite close. With swords lifted up high, they dashed in upon us.



GENERAL MARGUERITTE.

'Fire!' rang out the word of command. Now a hail of lead rattled against the bold horsemen. What a magnificent, warlike sight! Steadily aiming, calmly firing, the infantry sends off shot upon shot and the horsemen recoil as from a wall. A few steps in front of us they fall wildly in a heap. Here a horse falls, dashing its rider to the ground, there the horse and its rider fall as if struck by lightning; there again riderless horses gallop about in the crowd, rearing high and rushing back into their own ranks they spread the confusion still further. But ever new squadrons press forward, those in rear pressing upon those in front; the front ranks partly take to flight; as if seized by a whirlwind the confused masses surge. With a sudden cry the horsemen fall; ever calmly and surely the hail of shot from the infantry strikes in upon the writhing mass, horribly increasing the losses from second to second. Soon many hundreds of French horsemen cover the field, and still they do not give up the bloody game as lost, ever anew they start on the ride of death. All honour to whom honour is due! even to the foe."



GENERAL DE GALLIFET.

After the enemy's cavalry had been repulsed, the Prussian foot continued their advance. Whilst the troops were marching from Floing towards the Bois-de-la-Garenne and upon Cazal, the 43rd Brigade, moved from St. Albert to Cazal, and the 19th Brigade, which had only four battalions on the spot, advanced as far as the road Floing—Illy. The Calvaire d'Illy, the *point d'appui* of the right wing of the French army along the northern front, had meanwhile been taken and retained, in spite of repeated counter-attacks. In front of the 19th Brigade the enemy still held an elevated ridge with a strong force; not before several counter-attacks had failed did the occupying force retire to the Bois-de-la-Garenne. The plateau on the summit was now taken.

Meanwhile the 43rd Brigade, together with the musketeer battalions of the 46th Regiment and the 5th Battalion of Jägers, had got as far as Cazal and the southern portions of the spur. In the village of Cazal a battalion of French infantry was made prisoner, and afterwards the Germans advanced to within 300 paces of the glacis of the fortress. Isolated parties making sorties thence were easily repulsed.

With this the contest terminated on this part also of the battle-field. The Vth and XIth Corps had been on the move ever since 3 o'clock in the morning, and had proved equal to the very heavy demands made upon them. The Vth Corps lost in killed and wounded, 47 officers and 973 rank and file, and the XIth, 100 officers and 1456 rank and file.

THE WÜRTTEMBERG FIELD DIVISION DURING THE BATTLE.

This Division had marched out of its bivouac in the direction of the River Maas, over which a pontoon bridge had been made very early in the morning between Dom-le-Mesnil and Nouvion. The Staff, the 3rd Brigade and the 3rd Regiment of



ASSAULT UPON FLOING BY THE AFRICAN RIFLES.
(By permission of the Photographic Society of Berlin.)

(face p. 250).

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Cavalry crossed over first and moved on Vivier-au-Court, with a view to intercepting, west of that place, the anticipated retreat of the enemy upon Mézières. At ½ to 9 the whole division stood assembled there, and had just taken up a position facing east, when orders arrived to start for Donchery and remain there for the while as Reserve of the IIIrd Army. On the way General von Obernitz, the general in command, was informed that the bridge at Dom-le-Mesnil, covered only by the 3rd Battalion of Jägers, was threatened by hostile troops coming from Mézières. Accordingly the 3rd Brigade, under General von Hügel, was ordered to move against the enemy, who had come up to the village of Ayuelle. It turned out that the place itself was unoccupied, nevertheless the advancing battalions were received with a hot fire from the woods to the west of it. Even before the real attack was made the enemy had already fallen back upon Villers-devant-Mézières, and was pursued by the fire of the 7th Battery. The brigade remained at Dom-le-Mesnil, and the villages Flize and Nouvion were occupied each by a battalion, for security against Mézières. During the day the brigade of cavalry had taken up a position at Tumécourt, and after a short fight with the enemy's cavalry, it destroyed, near Lumes, the railway line Mézières—Sedan.

At half-past four in the afternoon the artillery of the division was ordered to advance to the heights north of Frénois, to take part in the bombardment of Sedan. Arrived on the spot, they had only time to fire off 39 shells, because the fortress then surrendered. The division lost 2 officers and 33 rank and file.

EVENTS ON THE FRENCH SIDE.

Early in the morning, at about 6 o'clock, Marshal MacMahon, who had gone with his Staff to the heights west of La Moncelle, was wounded by a splinter. He handed over the Chief Command to General Ducrot, commanding the 1st Corps, passing over the heads of the senior Generals, Douay and Von Wimpffen. Believing that the retreat upon Mézières was still possible, General Ducrot at once gave the necessary orders, but wished first to assemble the corps on the plateau of Illy. The divisions of the 1st and XIIth Corps, then standing in the second line, were to march off in a north-westerly direction, and the other divisions still engaged in the battle were to follow them as a rear-guard; whilst Lacratelle's Division and part of Vassoigne's Division were ordered to advance in force beyond La Moncelle, and Lartigue's Division stationed at Daigny was to co-operate with them.

But these movements were hardly begun, when General von Wimpffen, who disapproved of them, produced a secret authority given to him at Paris by General Count Palikao, the War Minister, conferring the Chief Command on him "if anything were, to happen to General MacMahon." General Ducrot retired, and General von Wimpffen assumed the Chief Command of the battle. He considered the retreat upon Mézières impossible, on account of the German troops which he knew had crossed the Maas at Donchery, and thought that the only chance of saving the army was to break through towards the east and forcibly effect a junction with Bazaine. The troops which had already begun the retreat had to face about, and fresh offensive movements against the XIIth and the Bavarian Corps were initiated. Some troops of the 1st Corps were sent to the northern front to support the hard-pressed VIIth Corps, which on its part was afterwards ordered to send all available troops to Bazeilles, when Wimpffen was informed at noon that his XIIth Corps had fallen back upon Sedan.

During the afternoon the French made their two last desperate attacks,—the Great Cavalry Storm on the northern front and the last attack upon Bazeilles, made to open the road to Carignan. But this last attempt at breaking through, for the execution of which General von Wimpffen could hardly collect 6000 men, only led to fresh embittered fights, and was wrecked against the resistance of the Bavarians and the Army of the Maas.

The Emperor Napoleon, who at 6 o'clock in the morning had betaken himself to the battle-field, but had returned to Sedan at 11 o'clock, was asked in vain by the Commander-in-Chief to put himself at the head of his troops in this last attempt at breaking through, as "they would be on their honour to make a road for him through the German forces."¹

The catastrophe had arrived—the Army of Châlons saw itself forced to lay down its arms.



GENERAL V. WIMPFEN.

THE CLOSE AND RESULTS OF THE BATTLE.

His Majesty the King, who, as already mentioned, was directing the battle from the hill near Frénois, and had perceived that the French army was scarcely able to offer any further resistance, thought that he would be able to convince the enemy of the hopelessness of his position and would induce him to lay down his arms, by directing an overwhelming artillery fire against the fortress of Sedan. Accordingly, orders were given for all the artillery that was placed on the left bank of the Maas to concentrate its fire upon Sedan. Speedily the town was on fire in several places. When, at about 4 o'clock, the 5th

Bavarian Jägers approached the Torcy gate the white flag was hoisted there by the express command of Emperor Napoleon himself; and after one more short fight in Balan further advance was arrested and firing ceased. His Majesty the King of Prussia now sent Lieutenant-Colonel Bronsart von Schellendorf to the French Commander-in-Chief to demand the surrender of the fortress and of the army. He was, however, at once led to the Emperor Napoleon, of whose presence in Sedan the German Head-Quarters had not till then been aware. The Emperor received him and then sent an autograph letter to King William, as follows: "Not having been able to die in the midst of my troops there is nothing left me but to surrender my sword into Your Majesty's hands. I am Your Majesty's faithful brother, Napoleon."

General Reille delivered the letter to the King, who thereupon wrote in reply: "Regretting the circumstances in which we meet, I accept Your Majesty's sword and

¹ Text of Von Wimpffen's letter: "Sire, Je me décide à forcer la ligne qui se trouve devant le Général Lebrun et le Général Ducrot, plutôt que d'être prisonnier dans la place de Sedan. Que votre Majesté vienne se mettre au milieu de ses troupes, elles tiendront à honneur de lui ouvrir un passage." 1.45 p.m. 1st Sept., 1870. [*Trs.*]

beg you to appoint an officer, invested with full powers, to treat about the capitulation of the Army that has fought so valiantly under your command. I, on my part, have appointed General von Moltke for this."

The Order issued from the Great Head-Quarters at $\frac{1}{4}$ past seven in the evening announced, "that negotiations had been entered upon, and that no movements of attack must take place, though any attempt to break through must be resisted by force of arms."

The German troops now remained in the several positions which they had occupied at the end of the battle, whilst the French soldiers totally disorganized



THE ATTEMPT TO BREAK THROUGH: PARK AT BALAN.

hastened in masses to the protecting fortress and crowded in in a perfect hand-to-hand scuffle, or sought in small parties to reach the Belgian frontier.

The negotiations for the capitulation began late in the evening at Donchery, and Count von Bismarck, Chancellor of the North German Confederation, took part in them. On the French side appeared General von Wimpffen, who previously had begged the Emperor in vain to relieve him of his command, and General Castelnau, the latter charged to defend the interests of Napoleon. General von Moltke demanded: That the French Army should lay down their arms and surrender as prisoners of war; but to the officers it was conceded that they should be allowed to depart, on their engaging not to serve against Germany during the whole of the present war.—The French negotiators thought they could not accept such terms,



THE WHITE FLAG ON THE GATE OF SEDAN.

spite of the threat of General von Moltke, that next day the unconditioned capitulation would be enforced by arms. At one o'clock at night the negotiations were broken off without result.

General von Wimpffen returned to Sedan and called a Council of War, which was attended by 36 Generals. The question whether a continuation of the battle was possible was negatived in view of the entire futility of all resistance. The Emperor Napoleon was not present at this Council of War. He had quitted Sedan at 6 o'clock in the morning, and requested an interview with the Chancellor of the Confederation. This took place in a wretched little house on the road to Donchery, whilst the German troops were making ready for a renewal of the fight, as hostilities were to be resumed at 10 o'clock, if by that time the capitulation was not concluded. At about 10 o'clock the negotiations between Generals von Moltke and Von Wimpffen were resumed, and finally

an agreement was come to. The King had already accepted in anticipation the terms of

capitulation, declaring that he would not see the Emperor Napoleon previous to their being signed. The French Army was made prisoner of war; but in consideration of their brave defence, the officers were to be excepted, on condition of their binding themselves by their word of honour in writing, not to fight against Germany during the present war. Officers not inclined thereto and the men should be led, at the latest by the 3rd of September, into the peninsula formed by the Maas to the north-west of the fortress, and be handed over at Iges to the German authorities. All war materiel was to be

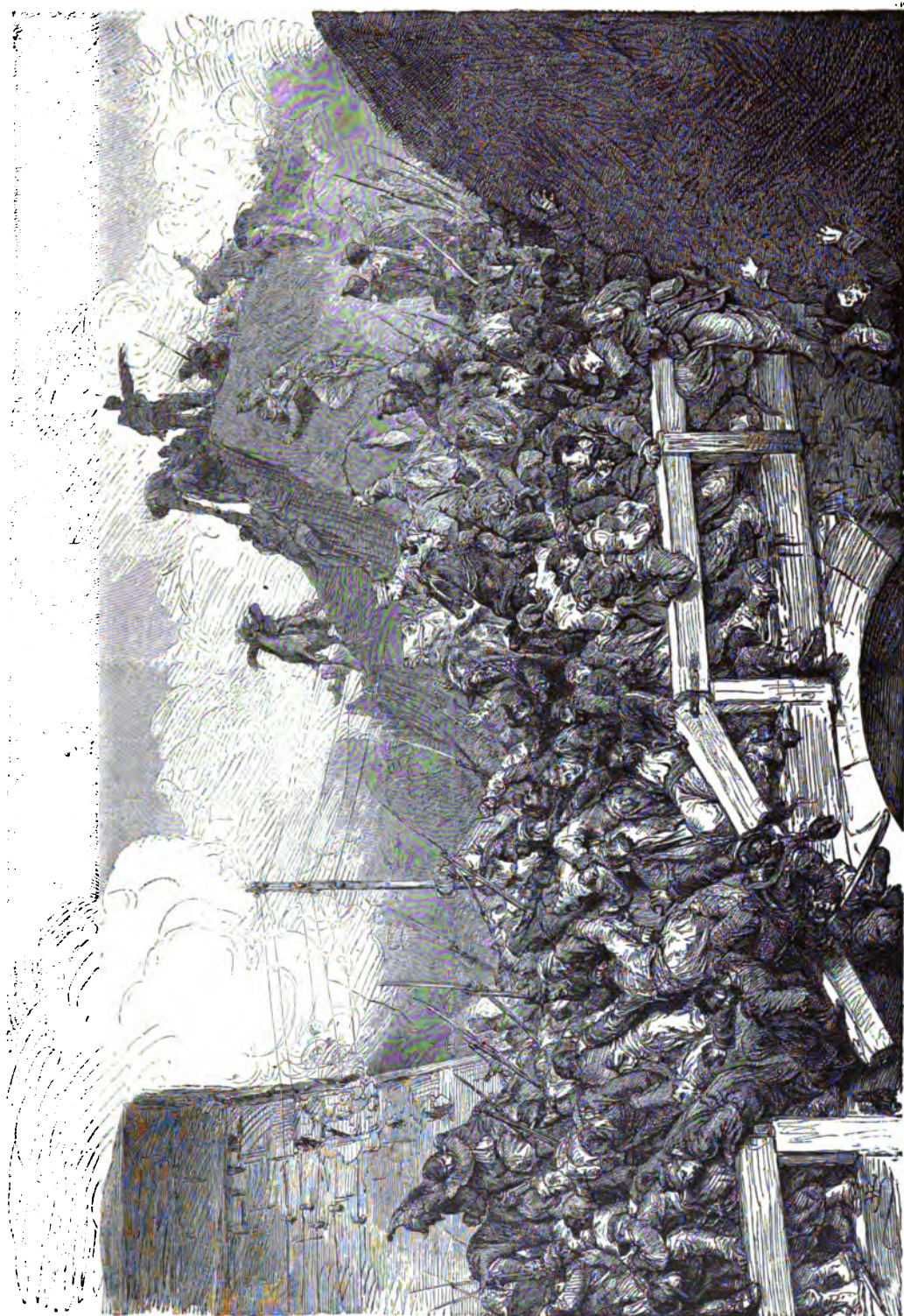
Monsieur mon frere

*Monsieur, je vous salue
un million de mes braves
il me est doux de vous
mon esprit avec les mains de
Votre Majesté*

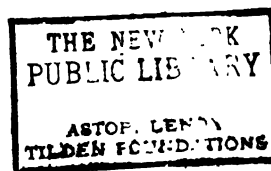
*I am, I vote Majesty
to be free*

Wimpffen

Sedan 6 7 Sept 1870

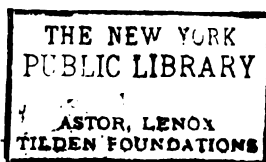


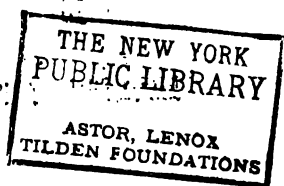
FUGITIVE FRENCHMEN AT THE GATES OF SEDAN.





GENERAL REILLE DELIVERS NAPOLEON'S LETTER TO KING WILLIAM.
(By permission of the Photographic Society of Berlin.)







NAPOLEON, ESCORTED BY BISMARCK, ON THE DAY AFTER THE BATTLE OF SEDAN, GOING TO MEET KING WILLIAM.

[face p. 255.]

handed over immediately, and the fortress by the evening of the 2nd of September.

Meanwhile the King, the Crown Prince and other Princes present with the Army had assembled upon the heights at Frénois (P. Hassel, Third Army). There was yet to take place a solemn important act, to in a manner conclude the mighty event of Sedan: the last assembly on the ever memorable place of glory for the German name: a few hours later the Headquarters and the armies were once more to part company and advance into Champagne by their several routes. In the foreground, near the edge of the slope, stood the King, with the Crown Prince and the other Princes; near him stood the Generals, Aides-de-



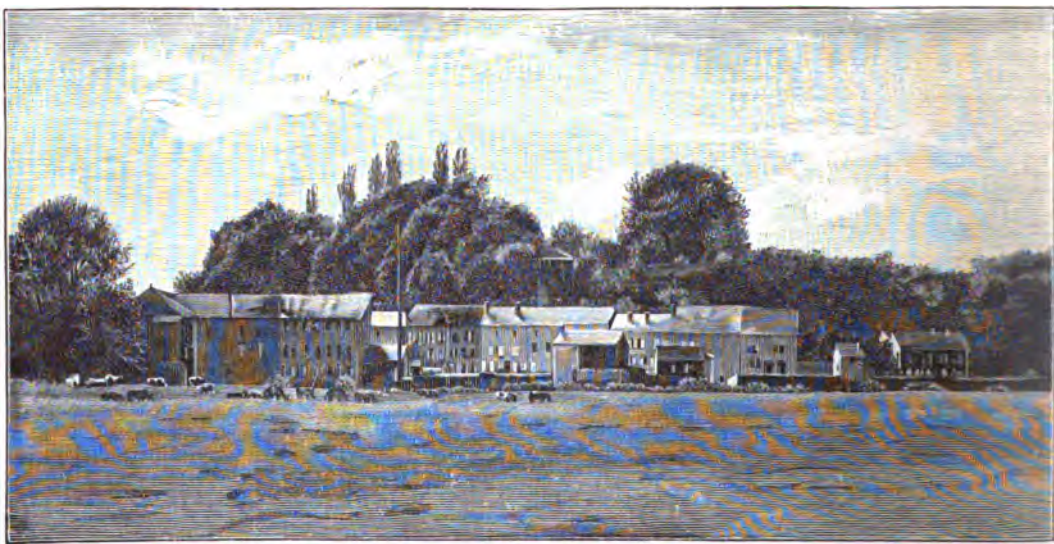
NEGOTIATION BETWEEN BISMARCK AND NAPOLEON AT THE
WEAVER'S COTTAGE AT DONCHERY.

camp, Ministers and Counsellors, the members of the several Headquarters, in all about two hundred persons, in a semicircle round; further back stood escorts and orderlies, saddle-horses and equipages. Between 11 and $\frac{1}{2}$ past 11 General von Moltke brought the capitulation concluded at Frénois. The King handed it to General von Treskow, his Aide-de-camp, and ordered him to read it out aloud. When this was done, the King stepped into the midst of the circle which was formed round him, and said: "You are now aware of the greatness of the historic event we have witnessed. For this I am indebted to the glorious achievements of the United Armies, to whom I feel impelled, on this occasion, to express my Royal Thanks; and this all the more, because these great successes are well fitted to cement more strongly the friendship which unites the Princes of the North German Confederation and our other allies with us, so that we may hope that a happy future awaits us. Our task is by no means finished by that which has been accomplished here under our eyes; for we do not yet know how the rest of France will receive and regard it. We must therefore remain ready to fight; but even now I render my thanks to everyone who has contributed a leaf to the laurel-wreath of glory for our fatherland."

Then His Majesty betook himself to the Château Bellevue, near Frénois, where meanwhile the Emperor Napoleon had arrived, and the two sovereigns conversed for a quarter of an hour, mainly on matters concerning the Emperor personally. Napoleon thankfully accepted the King's offer, to place the castle of Wilhelmshöhe, near Cassel, at his disposal. Early on the 3rd of September he started upon his journey, via Donchery and Bouillon, and was escorted as far as the Belgian frontier by a squadron of the 1st Hussars of the Life Guards. In the afternoon of the 2nd of September, King

William proceeded to greet the majority of the victorious troops in their several positions. A surging roar of tumultuous acclamation announced from afar the approach of the aged Commander-in-Chief, who, accompanied by the Crown Prince of Prussia, Count von Bismarck and a numerous retinue, everywhere in gracious words gave utterance to his thanks and acknowledgments. Not till late in the evening did he, in a pouring rain, return to his Head-Quarters.

The XIth and the Ist Bavarian Corps were detailed to guard the prisoners and escort them back, and accordingly had for the present to remain at Sedan. The other troops began their advance upon Paris on the 4th and 5th of September. Although the expectation, that the capitulation of the Army of Châlons and the



TOUR À CLAIRE (AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE PENINSULA TO WHICH THE FRENCH PRISONERS WERE BROUGHT).

(After an oil-painting by Bracht.)

capture of the Emperor Napoleon would shortly be followed by the conclusion of peace, was not realized, still all looked forward cheerfully to coming events.

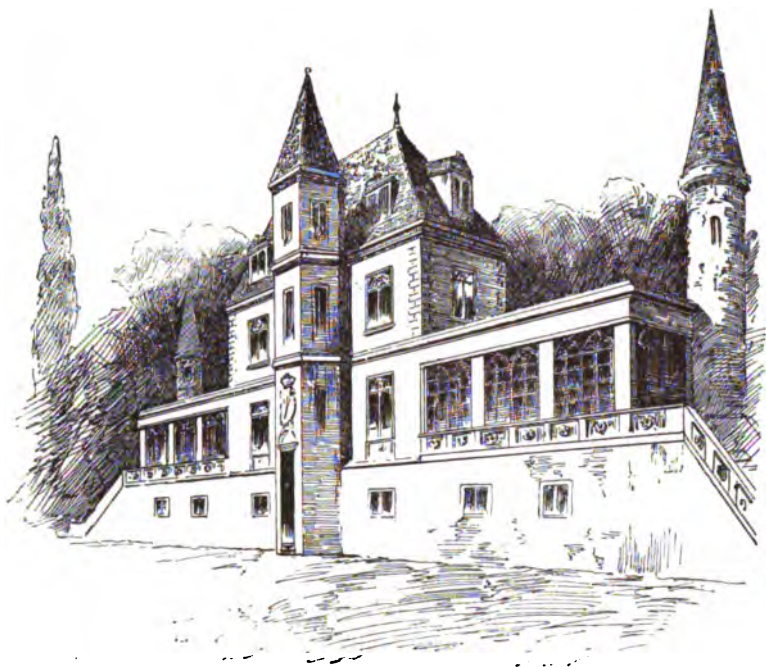
The losses on the German side were not excessive in proportion to the successes gained: 460 officers, and 8500 rank and file were either killed or wounded in the battle. Of the officers of superior rank, there had fallen: Lieutenant-General von Gersdorff (General-in-Command of the XIth Corps), Colonels von Scherbening (Corps Artillery of the Guards Corps) and Von Bessel (94th Regiment of Infantry).

The French lost in the battle: 3000 killed, 14,000 wounded, 21,000 prisoners, 3000 disarmed in Belgium, and 83,000 prisoners of war in virtue of the capitulation. Besides there were taken: 1 eagle, 2 standards, 419 field-guns and mitrailleuses, 139 pieces of fortress artillery, 1072 vehicles of all kinds, 66,000 small arms, and 6000 horses still fit for service.

Simultaneously with the catastrophe of Sedan an attempt of the Army of the

Rhine to break through the German lines of investment of Metz failed in the two days' battle at Noisseville.

The painter Bleibtreu, famous for his battle-pieces, graphically describes the mighty events at Sedan in two letters to his wife. On the 3rd of September he wrote: "No, never as long as I live shall I forget this day, the day which I have been trying to imagine from my boyhood up. Now, the question: What is the German's fatherland? ¹ is disposed of; we are no longer the manure of Europe. ²



CHÂTEAU BELLEVUE.

"What trains of prisoners! I stand at the gate of Sedan and watch the prisoners march past by the hour together. There seems no end of them. I am all but overwhelmed by the masses of men which crowd all the roads and march by without any guards to watch them. Here gloomy-looking officers, who feel deeply their defeat and the disgrace of their country; there the picturesque dark forms of the African hordes, the unscrupulous, frivolous Zouaves, Chasseurs d'Afrique, Spahis etc. And what costumes! One would wish to have a hundred eyes to take it all in at once. I am as if in a dream, and yet this day has surprised me least of all; it could have been foreseen. Now we march straight upon Paris; for, although the French army has ceased to exist, we cannot conclude the peace we desire, except in the enemy's capital, because the Parisians will never consent to the cession of Alsace-Lorraine, unless the sword is placed at their throat."

A few days afterwards Bleibtreu writes:

"On the 3rd of September, two days after the battle, I went with General von Schulz, the newly-appointed Commandant of Sedan, and four other officers into the fortress. We were quite alone amidst 80,000 Frenchmen, only outside the gates there were a few companies of Bavarians and Prussians. As I had ventured into the town the day before and witnessed how the French soldiers jeered at their officers, I was on the tip-toe of expectation to see how they would take the appearance of the Prussian Generals. To my surprise, the soldiers all stepped aside before us, saluting respect-

¹ The first line of a famous German patriotic song by Arndt. [*Trs.*]

² Emerson called the Irish and the Germans "the manure of Nations". [*Trs.*]

fully. Only a troop of Turkos, totally drunk, blocks our road and screams and roars: 'Down with these dogs! massacre the Prussians!' With his usual good-natured and kindly smile, the General walks straight up to the fellows, who, non-plussed and growling, fall back, and only resume their abusive howlings after we have long gone by. In the Prefecture, General von Wimpffen receives us with his Staff. The business between the two Generals was conducted with all the forms of courtesy, but still there was something very touching about it.

"Often Wimpffen turned aside to brush away a tear, and, like broken-down men, his officers stood facing ours. But soon the scene changed! Noisily a troop of French officers came up stairs and walked straight up to Schulz, urgently pressing all sorts of demands upon him. 'Hand it in in writing, Gentlemen, in writing.' The French looked at each other disconcerted, and one by one slunk out of the door, as if from a cold shower-bath. Such a demand was altogether beyond them. Even Wimpffen with tears in his eyes could not refrain from smiling. Now we go out into the streets. There we see pushing and jostling of troops through all the squares and streets, men of all arms, horse and foot, in wild confusion. In the midst of this ever-changing chaos there are the dusky Spahis coldly and immovably, like statues, looking down from their high saddles upon the surging masses beneath them. There you see officers with cigars in their mouths, their caps askew, pressed upon the ear, hands in trousers'-pockets, just as if they were on the boulevards of Paris, laughing and coarsely jesting, watching from a gateway the mad and motley throng. Others, leaning against the wall of a house, lament with theatrical pathos: 'Ma pauvre patrie! Ma pauvre France!' and are glad when they notice that they attract attention. Even drunken men play such a farce with touchingly comic effect. And from time to time cries of vengeance against the Emperor are raised. In a courtyard there are, standing and sitting, a few higher officers, lost in genuine deep grief: they neither hear nor see anything of what is going on about them, they only think of the terrific fate that has overtaken their country.

"Now off to the gate! to see the march out of the conquered, the laying down of their arms. The privates fling them to the ground anyhow in the streets, and pass through the gate unarmed, only the officers still wear their swords. On the bridge some of these gentlemen suddenly draw their swords and, rolling their eyes heavenwards, break the blade and hurl the weapon over the railings into the water, just as in the last act of a tragic opera. 'Bravo! bravo!' shout the men leaning against the walls near the gate. The spectators too join in the comedy. But there are other spectators who watch the scene. Our splendid fellows, leaning upon their arms, pipe in mouth, close by the gate on the Donchery road. Never have I seen the contrast between Frenchmen and Germans exhibited more forcibly than in these moments."

RETREAT OF THE XIIIITH FRENCH ARMY CORPS UPON PARIS.

On the 1st of September General Vinoy had waited for the Army of Châlons. Of his Corps, only Blanchard's Division had, in the night between the 30th and 31st of August, been detrained at Mézières; the rest was still in the train on the way from Paris. Guilhem's Brigade he sent forward in the direction of Sedan; it became involved, as has already been related, in a short engagement with the 3rd Württem-

berg Brigade, south-east of Mezières, and soon fell back. As soon as General Vinoy had been informed of the issue of the battle of Sedan he determined to take his corps back again to Paris. He sent off Blanchard's Division that very night in the direction of Rethel, believing that the place was occupied by Exéa's Division; this, however, had already left for Laon, and the town was in the hands of the Germans. When Vinoy had learnt this, and Blanchard's Division had on the forenoon of the 2nd encountered the heads of the 5th and 6th German Cavalry Divisions, he struck off in the direction of Novion-Porcien.

Meanwhile, screened by these two divisions of cavalry, the German 12th Division had advanced to Rethel and the 11th Division to Amagne in order to capture the French, but Vinoy dexterously evaded this danger by a night-march. It was fortunate for him that the Commander-in-Chief of the Third Army^{*} had ordered the German Divisions of Cavalry and the VIth Corps to advance upon Reims, where considerable forces of the enemy were supposed to be assembled. In spite of that, the 12th Division continued on the 3rd of September the enterprise which it had begun, and repeatedly came in touch with the enemy. The gunners of the 1st Mounted Battery charged a party of infantry; at Château Porcien the 15th Dragoons were fired upon; but the enemy declined a battle, and after firing at the place for a short time, retreated towards Laon. The XIIIth Corps, sent for the most part by train, assembled at Paris on the 9th of September, and there formed the nucleus for the new army.

Amidst a heavy downpour, upon swampy roads, without shrinking from two night-marches Vinoy succeeded in escaping from his enemy, who was vastly superior in numbers and was at first very strong in cavalry. "On the forenoon of the 3rd of September the French and a German Division had passed each other, travelling in opposite directions, within the distance of one German mile ($= 4\frac{1}{2}$ Engl. miles). The gloomy weather had prevented them from seeing each other."

FALL OF THE EMPIRE AND PROCLAMATION OF THE REPUBLIC.

On the 2nd of September the population of Paris was greatly excited by vague rumours of a great and unsuccessful battle at Sedan. On the following day, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, Count Palikao, the Minister of War, informed the Corps Legislatif of the failure of Bazaine's attempt to break out, and of the defeat at Sedan, but said nothing about the capitulation. Jules Favre, a deputy of the Left, declared the Government to be deposed, but Palikao opposed him.

Not till the evening was the full extent of the affair known. Furious masses surged through the boulevards, shouting: "Down with the government! Long live the Republic!"

The National Guards fraternized with the people, the regular troops wavered, and Trochu, the Governor of Paris, let things take their course.

In view of the terrible commotion the President of the Chamber summoned the members for a night session. Now Palikao reported the capitulation, and carried the adjournment of the Chamber till noon of the day following. Favre declared that it was now incumbent on the men to whom the French nation had entrusted its affairs

^{*} The Crown Prince Frederick of Prussia. [*Trs.*]

to take proper steps for the safety of the country, in view of the fact that the "Supreme Power was without a holder." He moved, being supported by 26 Deputies, that Napoleon and his House be deposed, that a new government be appointed, and that General Trochu be confirmed in his post of Governor-General of Paris. The motion was, however, not immediately voted upon.

On the next morning the Empress held a Cabinet-Council. Trochu proved unreliable for the Imperial cause, and an attempt of Palikao to save it by getting himself appointed Dictator failed. The next session of the Chamber brought no decision; it was interrupted by a mob of armed and unarmed men bursting in. The tumult increased from minute to minute, Palikao was threatened, the President and most of the Deputies left the hall, and only a part of the left and the noisy shouters remained.

Invited by Favre, the mob and the Deputies marched to the Hôtel de Ville, singing the Marseillaise and shouting: "Long live the Republic!" At the Hôtel de Ville the resolution demanded by the leaders of the Left was carried: Deposition of the Napoleonic Dynasty, Establishment of the Republic and formation of a 'Committee of National Defence' as a 'Provisional Government'.

Those dull popular instincts which first had evoked the war with Germany now swept the Empire away. Napoleon III was replaced by the Third Republic, and the same men who overthrew him seized upon the government. Jules Favre, a lawyer, became Foreign Minister; Gambetta became Home Secretary; Picard became Chancellor of the Exchequer; and Leflô, Minister of War. Etienne Arago was Maire of Paris; Grevy, President of the Council of State; Trochu, becoming President of the new government, combined therefore this office with that of Governor-General of Paris. Rochefort, fetched in triumph out of his prison, was included additionally in the government. The Senate was dissolved, the Chamber under Thiers' guidance submitted in a becoming manner, saying: "In face of the enemy one must retire with dignity."

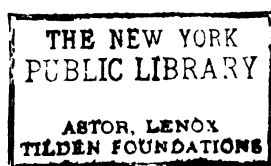
Palikao, Rouher and the Empress left the country. The latter, plainly dressed and full of anxiety, drove, on the 4th of September, in a common cab to the station. In silence and ingloriously her rule came to an end. In the night of September 5th the new government issued the following proclamation: "To save the country, which is in danger, the People have demanded the creation of the Republic. The Republic defeated the invasion of 1792, and will now again obtain the victory—to-morrow you will, with your army, be the avengers of the country." And Jules Favre, in the circular he sent to the French representatives at foreign courts, declared the intention: "We will not cede an inch of our territories, nor a stone of our fortresses." The men in power in France, and with them the whole nation, were resolved to continue the war—war to the knife.

Meanwhile the victorious German armies were marching west, unchecked, to Paris.



THE CAPITULATION OF SEDAN.
(By permission of the Photographic Society of Berlin.)

[face p. 260.



CHAPTER VIII

THE INVESTMENT OF PARIS

By ALBERT V. HOLLEBEN
General of Infantry.

THE battle of Sedan was fought, and the German armies pressed on to Paris to conquer peace before the walls of the proud capital of the enemy.

The Emperor Napoleon was a prisoner in Germany, the Empress had left Paris, the Republic was proclaimed, and by the cry "*Guerre à outrance!*" ("War to the knife") the new "Government of National Defence" had kindled fresh enthusiasm in the hearts of the French.

One army of the Empire being prisoners of war, and the other shut up at Metz, the last means for continuing the war seemed to lie in Paris; but it was left to the future to show what enormous resources wealthy France was able to place at the disposal of Gambetta for the execution of his bold plans.

With might and main the French had worked at strengthening the fortifications of Paris. 2627 pieces of heavy artillery with sufficient ammunition were placed on the walls; 100 of these were fitted ready to be moved up for the immediate reinforcement of any threatened point. Inclusive of 15,000 marines, 1000 gens-d'armes, coastguards, gamekeepers and police, the garrison of Paris amounted to 80,000 men of the Line, 115,000 Gardes Mobiles and 130 battalions of National Guards, these last being, during the course of the siege, increased to 283 battalions, with field-artillery gradually raised to 124 batteries.

At the outbreak of the war it had been arranged to make Paris the base for the supply of the Army of the Rhine. As soon as the Capital was threatened stores were added for the resistance of the city itself. The long duration of the investment proves on what a large scale the provisioning had been carried out.

Accounts and stories of the siege of Paris, of that gigantic city with two million inhabitants and the above-mentioned means of defence, by the comparatively small German force of 150,000 men with 620 field-guns, which only gradually was raised to 200,000 men with 1100 guns, and of the heroic endurance of these German troops in stern battles, sometimes accompanied by heavy losses, will sound in the ears of later generations like an Homeric epic.

From Château-Thierry, the *Castrum Theoderici* of the Middle Ages, which had in 1814 witnessed, not indeed victorious, but still glorious contests of Prussians and Russians against Napoleon,—the German Head Quarters issued on the 15th of September its directions for the close investment of the enemy's Capital, in one of those orders which, both for form and for matter, may serve as a model for all time to come. To



Scale : 5 English miles to 1 inch.

restrict ourselves to a simple investment and to leave the questions of a bombardment and of a formal siege to the future was necessitated, not only by the circumstances of the enemy, but also by our own position. ¹

By the above-mentioned order the Army of the Maas was directed to complete by the 19th of September the investment of the city on the right bank of the Seine and of the Marne; the Third Army was to advance on the left bank of these rivers, and on the arrival of the troops still marching up from the rear—viz., the XIth and Ist Bavarian Corps and the 8th and 9th Brigades of Cavalry—gradually to extend its left wing and connect with the right wing of the Army of the Maas. The 5th and 6th Cavalry Divisions were instructed to cross, if possible on the 18th, the Seine to the north-west of Paris, and thence to the south-west of Versailles to establish connection with the cavalry of the Third Army.

Accordingly on the evening of the 18th of September the two German Armies were posted as follows. OF THE ARMY OF THE MAAS: the XIIth Army Corps at Claye, the Corps of the Guards at Mitry, the IVth Army Corps at Dammartin; the 5th and 6th Divisions of Cavalry had at noon crossed over a bridge thrown at Pontoise, and the 6th Division of Cavalry arrived that very evening in the neighbourhood of Chanteloup. OF THE THIRD ARMY: The 2nd Division of Cavalry stood at Saclay, south-east of Versailles; the Vth Army Corps, parts of which had fought on the 17th of September victoriously at Créteil against troops of General Vinoy, crossed the Seine on the 18th, near Villeneuve-St. Georges, and arrived near Bièvre and south-east thereof. In this last-mentioned village stood the main body of the 18th Brigade, which was marching at the head of the Corps; its advanced guard, the 47th Regiment, 1½ squadrons of the 4th Dragoons and one battery, had encountered, north of Bièvre, some advanced troops of the XIVth French Corps, driven them back, seized Petit Bicêtre with one battalion, prepared it for defence, and established alarm-posts at Malabry and at Abbaye-aux-Bois. The IIInd Bavarian Corps had its 3rd Infantry Division and a Brigade of Uhlans at Longjumeau and to the north of it; its 4th Division was by Montlhéry, Saulx-les-Chartreux, and its Reserve Artillery at Ballainvillers. Of the VIth Army Corps, the 23rd Brigade crossed the Seine at Villeneuve-St. Georges, whilst the other brigades approached the river, but remained east of it; between the Seine and the Marne stood the outposts of the 24th Brigade. The 10th Brigade of Cavalry had crossed the Seine south-east of Corbeil, near Melun, and arrived in the evening south-west of the latter place, having encountered some francs-tireurs and armed peasants.

THE BATTLE OF CHÂTILLON ON THE 19TH OF SEPTEMBER.

The reports of the approach of the Third Army had caused a displacement of the French forces. On the evening of the 18th of September their XIVth Corps stood at the southern edge of the wood, from Meudon as far as Bagneux; the 15th marching

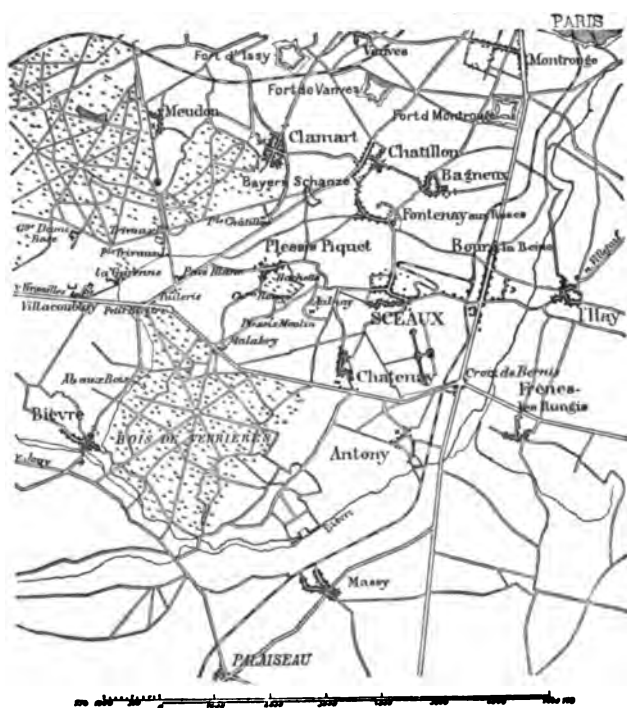
¹ The Germans at home impatiently waited for news of the bombardment of Paris, and being disappointed by the long delay, sent Moltke the following parody of a well-known nursery rhyme containing an allusion to his proverbial taciturnity:

Guter Moltke, gehst so stumm,
Immerum das Ding herum;
Bester Moltke, sei nicht dumm,
Mach' doch einmal bum, bum, bum. [*Trs.*]

regiment occupying the village Plessis-Piquet in front of the line, and a marching regiment of Zouaves holding Meudon at their right flank. The XIIIth Corps only moved one division up to Villejuif, from the right bank to the left bank of the Seine.

It will be to the point here and elsewhere in this treatise to quote an eminent French writer, Chuquet, whose impartiality is undoubted and highly esteemed; and this all the more because his work also appeared in this year of jubilee 1895. "Ducrot," he reports, "a genuine soldier who had given expression to the patriotic fears which haunted him ever since the battle of Sadowa,¹ foresaw the coming catastrophe, and opposed it with main and might in order to delay it; doing battle against Germany with wrath and hatred, or, as he himself expressed it, with the fire of the

ancient Gallic blood boiling in his veins. Ducrot, who was probably the most striking of all the actors in the defence of Paris, had received the command of the XIIIth and XIVth Corps. He had resolved to fall on the right flank of the Germans and to surprise the Prussians under Kirchbach, and the Bavarians under Hartmann as they were one after the other crossing the valley of the Bièvre on their march to Versailles and Villacoublay. He took up his position on the plateau of Châtillon, which, in spite of Trochu, he insisted on keeping possession of at all costs. But he had only the XIVth Corps under his command; the XIIIth Corps they would not entrust to him. Vinoy, a senior officer, distinguished by his retreat from Mézières, was indignant at being



Sketch for the battles of 19th September and 13th October.

subordinated to Ducrot, and Trochu dared not combine these two Corps.'

Early on the 19th of September the Vth German Corps continued its march upon Versailles; the troops of the 9th Division, which had formed the advanced guard, and which in consequence of the contest of the 18th stood on one side of the road from Palaiseau past Jouy, were to accompany it on the right flank. The orders for the IInd Bavarian Corps were to the effect that it was to advance on that day [18th] in the direction of Châtenay, and to bivouac.

The 9th Division had not yet started on its march when the French attack, delivered in two columns of one division in each, at Trivaux-Ferme and Pavé-Blanc, lighted upon the flank-detachment of the division, under the command of General von

¹ Königgrätz.

Voigts-Rhetz. Opposed to a threefold superiority, three guns of the battery allotted to the detachment were soon silenced; but the attack of a second battery, sent as a reinforcement, made it possible, after a short retreat, again to enter the fight.

The head of the French column on the right arrived, via Porte-de-Trivaux, in the wood of La Garenne, but were driven out of it again; on the other hand, the advanced troops of the left French column not only succeeded in penetrating into the wood of Verrières, but also in setting Bicêtre on fire and thus causing the evacuation of the place. Spite of the superiority of the enemy facing them, the brave 47th Regiment was able to check his advance and to retain possession of the ascent out of the defile of the Bièvre valley, cavalry covering their flank by Villacoublay. But it was high time for reinforcements to come up; reinforcements destined to further strengthen and cement the brotherhood of arms already established and consecrated by the blood shed in common on the battle-fields of Wörth and Sedan. ¹

Of the IInd Bavarian Corps, the 5th Brigade had reached Châtenay at about 8 o'clock in the morning, and had advanced a battalion upon Sceaux; whilst the 4th Division, following them, stood in readiness at Croix-de-Bernis and Antony, and the Brigade of Uhlans at Frènes-les-Rungis; Bourgl-Reine was also occupied by a battalion. The 6th Bavarian Brigade was ordered to march via Bièvre to Petit-Bicêtre. At the former place it crossed the 9th Division which was assembling in the trough of the valley; on hearing the sound of artillery from the north constantly growing louder, they hastened their march. Colonel von



GENERAL DUCROT.

Diehl, commanding the brigade, being informed by a Prussian officer of the state of the battle at Bicêtre, ordered "that his men should, as they arrived at Abbaye-aux-Bois, south of Bicêtre, immediately join in the engagement."

The 3rd Battalion of Jägers first arrived on the field; the Bavarian battery commanded by Captain Lössl posted itself by the side of the two Prussian batteries, which were suffering heavy losses in this severe contest; the initiative gained by the Jägers led to an offensive movement against the enemy, who was overthrown, and had to fall back upon his Reserves at Pavé-Blanc; it thus became possible to reinforce the positions of the Germans at Bicêtre, by the other battery of the Bavarian brigade, commanded by Captain Reuss. The infantry that had meanwhile arrived, deployed along the edge of the Bois-de-Verrières and at Le Petit-Bicêtre, one battalion of infantry and a regiment of cavalry remaining in reserve south of Bicêtre. Reinforcements for the 2nd battalion of the 47th, which was making a stand against the enemy

¹ At both these battles Bavarians fought side by side with Prussians. [Trs.]

at Trivaux-Ferme, in the wood of La Garenne, were also approaching, from Sandrart's Division.

At about half-past eight the French delivered a fresh attack, supported by 50 pieces of artillery. The column on their left wing, Hugue's Division, endeavoured to reach Bicêtre by passing over the brickfields, but the valiant resistance of the Bavarian infantry posted in the wood of Verrières arrested this movement. When the advanced troops of the right column, Caussade's Division, deployed towards La Garenne, shells fell among the regiment of Zouaves posted at Trivaux-Ferme, whereupon these men, who, as Chaquet reports, "had been but lately formed and had of the Zouave nothing



GENERAL V. HARTMANN.

but his uniform, take to flight, uttering cries of terror and spreading their alarm as far as the city." Caussade's Division deployed west of Trivaux-Ferme and advanced to the attack of La Garenne; but by this time the reinforcements of the Vth Corps had arrived there, and the regiment of the King's Grenadiers was extended as far as the western part of the wood of Meudon. Received by a hot fire, greatly shaken by the flight of the Zouaves and by the hasty retreat of a marching battalion, and threatened in the right flank, the advance of the newly formed regiments is arrested; now the Prussian infantry on their part advance to the attack upon the wood of Dame-Rose and throw the French skirmishers back upon their supports. "The confusion was extraordinary;" Ducrot, unable, spite of his personal efforts, to restore order

among his panic-stricken troops and to encourage them to renew the attack, and seeing the ever increasing danger of being out-flanked, determined to retreat through the wood of Meudon and take up his former positions.

On the right wing of the Germans the Bavarian infantry had, amidst a heavy artillery fire from the French, seized the brick-field of Pavé-Blanc, and an attack made upon them at about 10 o'clock from Plessis-Piquet was repulsed. In the changed situation Colonel von Diehl next ordered his brigade to form on a front facing Plessis-Piquet. The seven Prussian and three Bavarian batteries that were engaged in the fight could, now that Pavé-Blanc was in our possession, advance to a line from this place through Trivaux-Ferme to the wood of Meudon. Trivaux-Ferme and the southern part of the wood of Meudon were occupied, and the other three brigades of the Vth Army Corps stood by this time, 10 o'clock, in readiness at Villacoublay.

Now let us turn to the events taking place where the main forces of the

Bavarians were situated east of the wood of Verrières. At half-past eight Colonel von Diehl had already asked General von Hartmann "to give him direct support by sending him some artillery, and indirect support by making a counter-attack from the direction of Antony." General von Hartmann, correctly estimating the importance of the plateau of Châtillon, had determined to take possession of it at the earliest possible moment, and haste was all the more desirable in order to leave the French no time to finish their intrenchments there. He accordingly gave orders at about 9 o'clock at Chatenay, for the 7th Brigade to move forward via Fontenay-aux-Roses, and the 5th via Sceaux. Thus the 5th Brigade had already started on the march northwards from Chatenay, and three batteries were advancing to take up a position west of Chatenay, when, at a quarter to ten, the above-mentioned request of the commander of the 6th Brigade was delivered to the commander of the Corps; artillery and musketry fire from the side of Plessis-Moulin and Aulnay met the advancing infantry. The Corps commander now determined that the 5th Brigade should seize the heights of Plessis-Moulin and should effect a junction with the 6th Brigade; at the same time two heavy batteries were sent via Malabry to the immediate support of the 6th Brigade; the 7th Brigade had to maintain its position at Bourg-la-Reine, the 8th and the Artillery Reserve were brought up to Chatenay.

According to Chuquet's report, "Causade's and Hugues' Divisions had fallen back in disorder; the former, which was to have reoccupied its former position at Clamart, withdrew spontaneously and without orders right into Paris." Ducrot writes: "Meeting General Trochu at the Porte de Versailles, answer was made to his enquiries, that the battle was all over and all the troops were coming back."

Hugues' Division, which was to have made front again at Fontenay-aux-Roses, quickly vanished behind the slopes of Châtillon and Bagneux; nevertheless Generals Hugues and Patrel succeeded, by their resolute bearing, in arresting the flight of the troops. According to Ducrot a mistake made in giving out the orders for the contemplated evacuation of the position of Châtillon, led to the evacuation of a commanding position south of Bagneux by Maussion's Division, which had not yet been attacked, and now retreated as far as Fort Montrouge; General Ducrot being informed of this, caused Fontenay-aux-Roses to be occupied by troops of Hugues' Division, so as to cover his flank against the forces of the enemy at Sceaux and Bourg-la-Reine.

On the Prussian side, the Vth Corps, being convinced that the IInd Bavarian Corps would be able, even without support, to discharge the further duties of the day allotted to it, began, in obedience to the instructions for the 19th of September



GENERAL TROCHU.

received from Head Quarters, to march upon Versailles, but at the request of Colonel von Diehl, the 18th Brigade, two squadrons and two batteries were left behind at Villacoublay.

The French regiment still maintained its position at Plessis-Moulin and Plessis-Piquet, which had been prepared for defence. At about 11 o'clock General von Walther, commander of the 3rd Bavarian Division, orders a combined attack by both his brigades upon the position. The 5th Brigade advances from the south and south-east, and the 6th from south-east; the artillery, under a heavy musketry fire from the enemy, advances to within a short range of his front, and a battalion directs its fire upon the west side of Plessis-Piquet; after a short but fierce contest Plessis-Moulin is taken and Château Rouge and Hachette are occupied. The French regiment, unsupported, but still offering a stout resistance, is unable to withstand the outflanking attack of the Bavarians; pioneers widen the breaches made by the Bavarian artillery: "A loud hurrah spreads like wild-fire along the whole line, and all the troops storm *en masse* against the fortified position of the French and drive them out."

The pursuit began under a heavy fire from the redoubt of Châtillon and from the neighbouring heights; already the left wing of the 6th Brigade has passed Plessis-Piquet and arrived at Porte-de-Châtillon; heedless of the rain of bullets, Lössl's battery advances on the Paris road, and its heroic commander falls wounded to death in sight of victory; more batteries join in, and a battalion, after a battle with changing fortune, succeeds in maintaining its position close to the redoubt. Ducrot, who was also threatened by the 7th Bavarian Brigade, which had changed front to the left and moved forward in the direction of Sceaux and Fontenay, orders the evacuation of the plateau; covered by the fire of the artillery, the infantry abandons even its position in the redoubt. A patrol sent forward to scout reports that the intrenchment is abandoned, and some Bavarian companies storm up, take a few prisoners, and fire upon the crowd of hastily retreating enemies; eight heavy pieces of artillery and one piece of field artillery are captured.¹

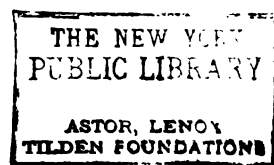
According to Heilmann, a Bavarian officer on the General staff, "there were found in the intrenchments, besides the captured artillery, small arms, piles of soldiers' kits, knapsacks and stores of every kind, which lay about in the greatest confusion partly in the interior of the intrenchment and partly in the bomb-proof store-rooms. Like the interior of the intrenchment, so its environs were covered everywhere with relics of a camp suddenly forsaken. Thousands of blankets, tents, cooking-utensils, knapsacks, great bales of compressed hay, saddles and harness, hundreds of loaves

¹ The Editor has before him a very characteristic letter by the battle-painter, Professor Bleibtreu, dated Versailles, September 22nd. "The day before yesterday that proud Babylon lay at my feet. The Vth Army Corps and the Bavarians had taken the intrenched lines in front of the Paris forts by storm. From the principal intrenchment thus taken and the terrace of Fontenay I beheld the gigantic city with its boundless sea of houses spread out before me. On the terrace I sat in a circle of the officers of the 7th Bavarian Regiment, the one that had most suffered and distinguished itself in the assault upon the intrenchments. We had some bottles of wine before us, and clinked glasses upon every sentiment which just then stirred our hearts—when suddenly one officer sprang to his feet, and amidst the thunder of the enemy's artillery, proposed a toast to the future German Emperor, the Crown Prince. The enthusiasm evoked by this toast was indescribable—the whole of this 'King Arthur's round table' exultingly leapt to their feet, and after a threefold 'Hurrah!' dashed their glasses to the ground. Once again a moment in my



ARRIVAL OF THE BAVARIANS BEFORE PARIS.
(By permission of the Photographic Society of Berlin.)

[face p. 268.]



of bread, full and empty ambulances, limber and other ammunition-boxes, officers, portmanteaus, intrenching tools etc. lay about. In a building east of the intrenchment on the Paris road there were magazines full of wine, biscuits, flour, pulse, pickled meat—nay, even an ice-cellar, so that along with the intrenchment we got possession of their provisions for a good three months."

Securing the conquered heights against a French attempt to regain the plateau, the IInd Bavarian Corps went into cantonments and bivouacs, placing outposts along the edge of the plateau in conjunction with the Vth and VIth Army Corps. It was a memorable and glorious day for the Bavarian troops. In accordance with an order from the Commander-in-Chief of the Third Army, the redoubt of Châtillon received the name of "the Bavarian Field-work [Bayern Schanze]." The enemy was correspondingly depressed. "The disaster of that day," says Chuquet, "could not again be made good; confidence was gone, the people cried again and again, that the troops were no good and that the Zouaves had been the first that had run away."

In the afternoon the Vth Corps arrived at Versailles; the other forces of the Third Army had occupied the positions assigned to them for the 19th of September, without having had any serious encounters with the French. In the evening the outposts formed a wide semicircle round the south of the enemy's capital.

News of the presence of hostile infantry on the heights north of St. Denis having been received at the Head Quarters of the Army of the Maas on the 18th of September, it was anticipated that parts of the army might in their movements on the 19th of September become involved in somewhat serious engagements; and the same opinion was held at the Great Head-Quarters. The Crown Prince of Saxony had accordingly made all the arrangements which appeared necessary, and had betaken himself early on the 19th to an elevated spot west of Arnouville. In detail, orders were given that the IVth Army Corps should pass Sarcelles and attack the enemy, who was believed to be at Pierrefitte, driving him into St. Denis, while the Corps of the Guards should afford suitable co-operation.

Contrary to this expectation the investment by the Corps of the Army of the Maas was effected without any serious collision. The battalions of Fusiliers of the 15th Brigade drove back upon St. Denis some small bodies of the enemy's infantry out of the villages of Montmagny, Villeteuse and Pierrefitte, which had been prepared for defence; General von Pape, commander of the 1st Division of the Guards, after a slight engagement took Stains with one company of the battalion of Jägers of the Guards, and Saxon infantry came in contact with strong bodies of French infantry at Bondy.

life, which I shall remember to the end of my days! Indeed it seems as if all greatness that I had longed for and aspired to for my country and which seemed unattainable to everybody else was to be attained! We shall no doubt stop some time here at Versailles, as the Parisians seem resolved to go to extremes. The city is wholly invested and all supplies are cut off; the desire is to avoid all bloodshed and all destruction of the suburbs of Paris and to compel the inhabitants and the garrison to surrender through hunger. The immediate environs of Paris make a desolate impression; all the inhabitants have fled, the beautiful country-houses are laid waste, the parks are turned into entanglements, barricades, shelter-trenches and intrenchments of every kind. In Versailles, however, the inhabitants have remained, and they behave more complaisantly to the conquerors than could have been expected. It will be much the same in Paris, when once we are in.

In the evening Paris was also encircled on the north and north-east.

What impressions did not that day make upon us, the participators in its events! On all the roads leading to Paris we came across abandoned villages and farms which had been devastated and pillaged by the French themselves; burning barns containing wheat, hay or straw, bridges destroyed, road paving torn up,—“useless impediments,” as Chuquet correctly reports, “created in a hurry without any system whatever, but which testified to the fact that the war had assumed a new character.” The morning of the 19th of September was misty; towards 11 o'clock the mist cleared up.

There it lay before our eyes, the Capital of our enemy; we were able to over-



CHÂTILLON, MEUDON, ST. CLOUD, MONT VALÉRIEN.

look it far and wide; Montmartre, and the towers of the mighty city, pre-eminent among them that of the Pantheon,—the Arc de Triomphe, the elevated forts on the east, and near them the tents of the French camps were clearly distinguishable—Mont Valérien appearing in his might in the south-west, and the forts along the northern front. For the first time during this war the artillery of those forts spoke in words of thunder; how often were those sounds yet to pierce our ears by day and by night, laying waste their own splendid environs in combating their enemy!

Fifty-six years ago the eyes of our fathers and grandfathers had similarly surveyed yonder city. What memories may have been evoked in the mind of King William, the only warrior before Paris who had taken part in the War of Liberation, when

he rode from Meaux to the Corps of Guards at Gonesse, and, greeted with shouts of joy, read in the gleaming eyes of his troops their entire devotion to his cause. Not allied armies, but a homogeneous united people, now stood before those gates.

King William had the most remarkable localities of Paris pointed out to him with precision by his Aide-de-Camp, Count Waldersee, who had resided as military attaché in Paris up to the outbreak of the war. The King, turning to his followers, discoursed at length about his reminiscences of the battle of Paris which he had witnessed as a young Prince, and, from near the very spot where he then was, had seen the Prussian Guards advance victoriously against Montmartre. When it had been reported that the French advanced troops had everywhere been forced back upon Paris without a contest, the King went to Aulnay, thence to travel in his carriage to his new Head Quarters at Ferrières. In Lagny the King, who had had no food for twelve hours, took some refreshment at the lodging of Prince Charles, and arrived at 10 o'clock at night at Ferrières.

On the 19th and 20th of September interviews took place between Count Bismarck and Jules Favre, the new French Foreign Secretary, with the view of coming to terms about the conclusion of peace; but they proved futile, as the claims which the Germans were authorised to make appeared unacceptable to the French.

General Trochu determined to defend only the walls of Paris and the forts, and accordingly gave orders that all the troops that were still outside Paris should, on the evening of the 19th of September, withdraw into the city. Only Exéa's Division of the XIIIth Corps remained on the plateau of Vincennes. All the works under construction were abandoned, and the bridges, with the exception of that at Neuilly, for communication with Valérien,—and the railway-bridge at Asnières, were destroyed. On the west side of the city 30,000 men were posted under Ducrot; for the defence of the southern front 42,000 men under the command of Vinoy, were allotted, and the northern front was defended only by Gardes Mobiles and National Guards.

"The marching regiments," says Chuquet, "were unreliable and had no *esprit de corps*; one-third of them at most were good soldiers, and the Gardes Mobiles were still less serviceable. Among these were the Mobiles of the Seine, without discipline, boisterous, pillagers, abandoning themselves to the worst excesses. Even in the camp at Châlons they had given utterance to coarse insults against Canrobert and the Emperor with impunity; they refused to defend such posts as seemed to them too much exposed to danger, and presumed on the 20th of September to abandon Mont Valérien of their own accord. Those of the forts De la Briche and Double-Couronne borrowed plain clothes in St. Denis and spent the night in Paris.

"Of the National Guards, only the 60 oldest battalions were reliable, the others were mere mobs of boys, greybeards, vagabonds and criminals; but more importance ought to have been attached to their military training; how valiantly they fought during the time of the Commune!

"The Francs-Tireurs acted only according to their own discretion and did more harm than good. At the head of these defenders stood Trochu, a brave well-informed officer, who was considered one of the best Generals of the Second Empire, but who imagined himself to be a second Lamartine in uniform, and believed he could preserve order and keep the ferment of the mob under control, not with the sword, but with moral force, solely and alone by the influence of his pen and his tongue and by long procla-

mations, which failed altogether and only secured for him the nickname "Le colleur d'affiches ou le Général Trop-lu."

THE SIEGE OF PARIS.

It was necessary for the Germans without delay to strengthen the front lines of all their Army Corps by arrangements for defence, and to ascertain with accuracy what means of defence the enemy possessed. As early as the 20th of September all troops of the German army before Paris were busily engaged on this work and on more accurate regulation of the position of the outposts.

From all the villages in the sections assigned to the several Corps, all the spades, pick-axes, axes, hammers, saws, gimlets, nails etc., that could be found, were requisitioned and collected in dépôts by the officers of the engineers. Under the guidance and superintendence of officers and pioneers, the infantry began to prepare brushwood work, gabions, fascines and hurdles. In the lines of outposts the villages occupied were first prepared all round for defence, garden walls were fitted with banquettes, and also strengthened by parapets, loop-holes were cut out, gaps in the line closed by shelter-trenches, connecting-passages were formed behind these foremost lines and barricades made to block the enemy's entrance. As the streets of the villages were mostly commanded by the enemy's artillery, it was desirable to form communications by back lanes; in the case of enclosures turned towards us, demolitions were made, so as to enable us to see and dominate them from the main position in rear. At different places entanglements were made; the further these works advanced—and as a matter of fact this work never ceased during the whole time of the siege—the more we were able to effect improvements in details, subsequently further obstacles were created. At the sallies we found out our weak points, and we remedied them.

To enable our men to find their way, new sign-posts were put up in place of the old that had been destroyed or removed. We took a slight revenge on that occasion; if you enter to-day the mess-room of the officers of a regiment which greatly distinguished itself before Paris, you can find the French village sign-boards which once adorned their outposts, and were appropriated in memory of many a grave hour spent there in the midst of a fierce fire of shells and rifle bullets.

Next more detailed regulations were issued concerning the lines of defence to be held in case of an attack. These lines were now specially strengthened, even by making parapets for infantry and emplacements for batteries; in the main position of the Army of the Maas alone, 33 batteries were gradually assembled. Specially suitable points were fitted out as posts of observation and were constantly occupied by observers; the Great Head-Quarters were put in telegraphic communication with the Commanders-in-Chief of the Army of the Maas and of the Third Army and with the Commanders of all the Corps. Numerous bridges were built over the Marne and the Seine, to establish communications among the several units, and roads for the columns to reach them by were constructed. The Ourcq Canal being drained off about the end of September, there was created in front of a part of the Army of the Maas a not inconsiderable obstacle, whose passages were fortified and lay under the fire of our batteries. Much beautiful property was grievously injured by these measures of defence, but the French themselves had been beforehand with us in a

far more destructive manner. In preparing Pierrefitte, one of the villages in the out-post line of the Guards Corps, a splendid villa with a beautiful picture gallery was found utterly destroyed and sacked by the *Francs-tireurs*; the pictures were, unfortunately, soon either destroyed or injured by French shells; over the door there was afterwards placed the legend: "*Brulée par un obus français.*" In the earlier days our work was but little molested by the artillery fire of the enemy, and we laboured



KING WILLIAM ON THE AQUEDUCT OF MARLY.
(After a contemporary sketch by C. Freyberg.)

all the more industriously; later on we found it necessary to devote the night to this kind of work.

In the latter days of September His Majesty the King inspected all the works of the line of investment, as well as the troops round Paris. On the 28th of September he came, accompanied by the Crown Prince of Saxony, to the 1st Division of the Guards at Gonesse, and dismounted at their head-quarters. By chance, just then news arrived by telegraph that Strassburg had capitulated; the King was greatly delighted and said, referring to the fall of Toul, which had occurred only a few days previously: "Why, it all comes blow upon blow." Then he pressed Moltke's hand, who stood

near him. After a short breakfast His Majesty was conducted round the intrenchments by the divisional staff-officer. Especially at one place, whence there was a splendid view over Paris and which was occupied by batteries, the King remained a considerable time, deeply musing, and gazing through his glass at Paris. This spot was afterwards known as Wilhelmshöhe.

Splendid weather signalized the end of the month of September; the gardens were still full of flowers, only the colouring of the leaves of the trees indicated the



GENERAL V. MOLTKE.
(Original drawing by Fikentscher.)

advance of the season. In the beautiful pure air the troops enjoyed excellent health, and in the homesteads, most of which had been abandoned, they found abundant and good shelter; bivouacs being necessary only at the outposts, but even here wooden huts were steadily being erected for the protection of the men on duty. Spite of the great difficulty of provisioning two large armies, increased as it was by the removal of all the cattle and the destruction of the stores, there was never any scarcity, not for one hour. True, at first we had to tax our provision columns, but soon the skill and energy of the commanders in making safe the communications with

home put the provisioning on a safe footing. For this purpose as well as for the regular postal communication the fall of Toul was of highest advantage; and who of all the Germans standing in those days outside Paris, would care to deny that he looked longingly for news from "Home"?

Only of things which were not indispensably necessary, such as butter, sugar and, alas! for a short time, also coffee, was there some scarcity. A piece of butter bought of the French at our rear cost 3 francs (2s. 4½d.), an egg 15 pfennige (nearly 2d.). Our bread we baked ourselves; many an old farmer at home would have been astonished if instead of the inhabitants he had seen our soldiers at work in the fields, gathering fruits and potatoes and repairing threshing-machines; flocks of sheep were kept by soldiers; in a word, to our great advantage, we were both peasants and warriors; for the work in the field, as well as improving the commissariat and putting it on a secure footing, acted beneficially on the men by keeping them busy when they were not on outpost duty. Gladly and cheerfully the men toiled, each being aware of the advantage accruing to himself from his industry.

The arrangements of our quarters in the localities abandoned by the inhabitants were delightful. When quarters were changed some troops had to move the furniture from their old quarters, for they were perhaps moving into houses that were quite empty; bed linen and towels travelled from quarter to quarter. "We collect," writes home an officer, "the furniture of the quarters of our staff from five or six different villas; what a pretty confusion there will be, when after the war the owners come back again, and one finds in his house a sofa belonging to Mr. X., chairs of Madam R., dinner service of L., and has to look for his own things at Monsieur B.'s house—one thing is sure, they will all find their wine-cellars empty." The men had made themselves comfortable and were in high spirits; they all drilled very industriously, worked in the fields in fatigue parties, and heard lectures, especially on the existing state of affairs; much attention was now devoted to repair of uniforms and of rifles. Sitting in your rooms and hearing the drums outside, whilst drill was going on, you might have fancied yourself in garrison at home during peace; but a visit to the outposts, or a shell bursting before your quarters soon disillusioned you.

On the 7th of October two balloons, apparently coupled together, passed over the positions in the north occupied by the Guards. They were vigorously fired upon, and patrols of the hussars of the Guards pursued them, but in vain. On what trifles the fates of men often depend! Had we succeeded in hitting those balloons, the whole war would probably have taken a different turn; it was Gambetta, who had left Paris in a balloon, to raise new armies against Germany in the provinces.

The value of German good fellowship made itself specially felt here outside Paris: it had to take the place of family life. Anxious hours and amusing adventures passed together formed the staple of our subjects of conversation. We may here narrate an incident, which became a frequent source of hilarity to the members of the Staff of one of the investing forces. The Staff in question was ordered on the 14th of September, on the march from Sedan to Paris, to take up its quarters at Oulchy-le-Château. Even in that district the sign-post had already been removed by the French; and although we had maps in our hands, still it was always felt desirable to obtain information from the inhabitants. About a (German) mile (4½ Engl. miles) from the quarters several highways crossed; at the crossing was seen one of those

well-known, high-wheeled French carts, harnessed with a powerful Percheron gray; beside it stood a man in a blue blouse, with a carefully tended black moustache and *Henry IV*, his hat askew on one side of his head, a clay pipe in his mouth—in a word the very picture of an impudent French carrier. An officer of the Staff, brushing up his choicest French, rides up to the man and, pointing to the road, asks: “Est-ce le chemin à Oulchy-le-Château?” when the answer came back: “Wat meenen Sie?”¹ Loud laughter of the officers of the Staff! The fellow was a German sutler, who, with his Berlin unconcern, was heading the infantry marching upon Paris. Frequently after that there resounded in the quarters outside Paris, amidst the circle of comrades, if any one dropt a French phrase: “Wat meenen Sie?”

How long shall we have to stay outside Paris? When shall we enter the city? By these and similar questions we were all at that time exercised. One of our most eminent officers, Von S... then wrote home from Ferrières:² “It is difficult to say when we shall make our entry into Paris; it certainly will not prove pleasant, Paris being like a witch’s cauldron, in which the most hideous ingredients are fermenting, devoting to destruction everything good that is still in existence. One can hardly help being afraid to enter, and one must wish the ferment to increase as much as possible, so that the city may forfeit her preëminent position in France and that the power of the scoundrels now ruling may fall to pieces. All the news reaching us from Paris leads to the belief that the process is advancing tolerably rapidly, but you know how long a person in deadly sickness often takes to die. There is in Paris no man who has authority to conclude peace or sign a capitulation. We must wait for the moment when we shall give the *coup de grâce* to the quivering corpse. I

am afraid I am giving you the horrors, but ‘the mouth overflows, whereof the heart is full.’ Death in every shape is our daily companion, spite of all the glory and beauty

surrounding us. The environs of Paris are most charming, and prosperity is seen all around, and a desire to enjoy and to rest, such as we have no notion of. The peculiarity of a Frenchman to work like a horse till he has put by enough, and then to live only for his own personal gratification has produced a number of old people, who make idleness the task of their lives. I have frequently been quartered upon such people, and have been surprised at the limitation of their



BALLOON PURSUED BY HUSSARS.

¹ Berlin patois for “Was meinen Sie?” = “What do you mean?” [*Trs.*]

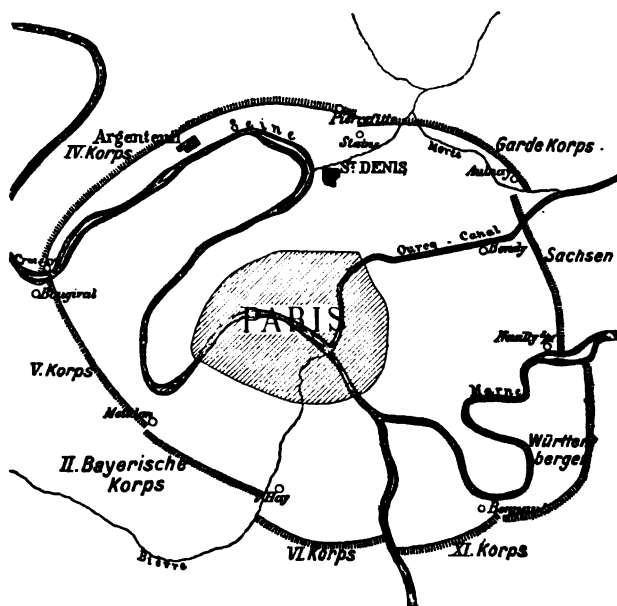
² The Royal Head Quarters (see above, p. 271).

intellectual horizon; they take no interest whatever in general matters... a barren, insipid race, unconcerned even about their own children. The longer you live in France the more your admiration for the country will increase and that for the people will diminish."

On the 20th of September the Head-Quarters of the Crown Prince of Prussia were moved to Versailles, and on the day following Paris was also invested from the west, by the infantry of the IVth Army Corps, which occupied Argenteuil, and by the 4th Battalion of Jägers, whose outposts connected with the left wing of the Third Army posted at Croissy. An attempt made by the VIth Army Corps on the 22nd of September, to establish itself on the heights of Villejuif, failed; after an outpost engagement the line of heights remained in the possession of Maud'huy's Division, which occupied the intrenchments there and armed them with heavy artillery. In front of the XIIth Army Corps considerable bodies of infantry attacked the outposts almost daily, but were uniformly repulsed by the Saxons.

The village Le Bourget had been occupied on the 19th of September by the 2nd Division of the Guards, and from that day the French kept up a fairly vigorous fire of shells against the place. These all but daily bombardments of the outpost positions, however, did not seem to be undertaken by the French for serious reasons only; in the last days of September we could distinctly make out from St. Denis, with our glasses, that the French were also firing from their walls for the amusement of their ladies; on the walls we could clearly see civilians and ladies watching the bombardment. When in January we were malicious enough to reply with heavy artillery, the petticoats vanished.

The Corps of the Third Army that had yet to come up, reinforced the lines of investment on the 23rd of September; the XIth Corps was posted left of the Württembergers, on both sides of the road to Troyes, relieving the 24th Brigade, which was moved to the left bank of the Seine. The 1st Bavarian Corps took up its quarters at Longjumeau forming a Reserve for the Army. The three Divisions of Cavalry covered our immediate rear on the left bank of the Seine; later on, when numerous hostile francs-tireurs made their appearance, some battalions of infantry had to be added; these were taken from the 1st Bavarian Corps.

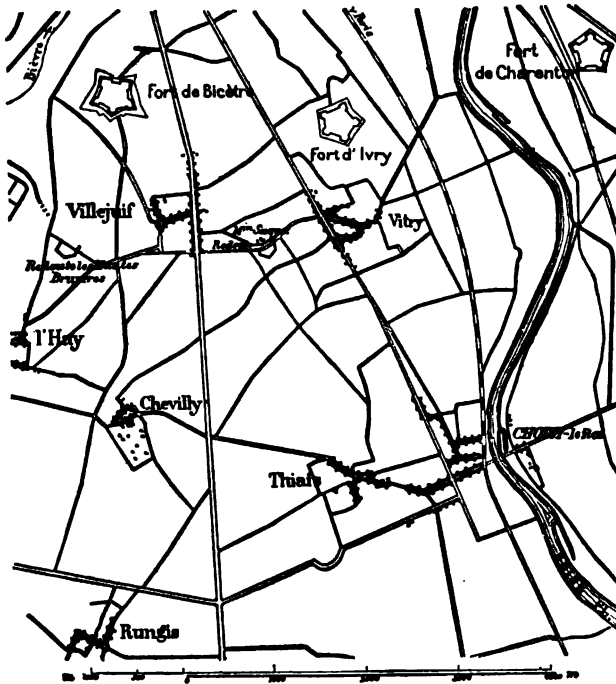


Positions of the German Corps of investment on 23rd September.

Scale: Six English miles to 1 in.

CONTEST AT CHEVILLY ON THE 30TH SEPTEMBER.

The last day of September witnessed a more serious sally of the French against the position of the VIth Army Corps south of Villejuif. General Vinoy erroneously supposing that Choisy-le-Roi was held by Landwehr, and that a bridge had there been thrown across the Seine, determined to destroy this bridge and to force the Germans to withdraw their lines of investment to places further to the rear. Vinoy, probably to his great surprise, received from Trochu detailed instructions for the advance of the XIIIth Corps. According to these it was to advance on the 30th of September in several columns, and make a reconnaissance towards the south; the



Sketch for the battle of 30th September.

right column, one brigade, leaning upon the high bank of the Bièvre, was to seize the village of L'Hay; the two centre columns, consisting of a regiment each, were respectively to seize Chevilly and to reach the cross-roads east of Chevilly; the fourth column, the strongest, was to turn against Thiais and Choisy-le-Roi. Ducrot, no doubt very justly, points out in his work, that this order, being as detailed as possible, limited General Vinoy's independence and left him hardly any thing to do beyond giving a few orders; but instead of a mere affair of outposts, and a coup-de-main, as Vinoy had planned, a large engagement was entered upon; large both as to its extent, and as to the number of troops employed.

The advance of the French, which was supported by feints for the purpose of keeping at a distance supports from the Army Corps next to the VIth, began at half-past five in the morning and was preceded by a vigorous fire from the forts against the Prussian positions. The field batteries of the left French column direct their fire against Choisy and Thiais; the picquets of the 23rd Brigade fall back upon the villages prepared for defence and upon the intrenchments constructed between them, which were held by the 22nd Regiment. Whilst a musketry contest was developing at Choisy, the French endeavour to encircle Thiais from the west. The 62nd Regiment comes to the support of the left wing at Thiais, where two batteries stand, with ten guns on the west of the village, firing at the advancing French infantry, whilst two guns stand on the east side in emplacements. The Prussian artillery west of the place is forced by the

advancing skirmishers of the enemy to retreat as far as the main road to Versailles. But the effective fire of the infantry defending Thiais, and of the two guns which are still in the fighting-line there, wreck the expedition, and at 9 o'clock the French are forced to retreat; at Choisy-le-Roi the retreat had begun at 8 o'clock.

Of the two centre columns of the French, which consisted of the regiments of the line of Guilhem's Brigade, one regiment had encountered the outposts of the 24th Brigade at Chevilly, and entered Chevilly very gallantly behind the retreating Prussian picquets, whilst the other regiment and a battery reached the cross-road east of the place. From here General Guilhem directed his artillery-fire upon Chevilly, ordered one battalion to remain in observation of Thiais, and personally led the attack with two battalions. In spite of their bold and vigorous advance, the attack is broken against the walls of Chevilly, under the "fearful" rapid fire of the 23rd Regiment and 6th Jägers; mortally wounded, General Guilhem falls and his infantry retires in disorder. At the same time the right wing of the French was engaged at L'Hay against seven companies of the 23rd Regiment; a part of the French infantry, having suffered heavy losses, was already retreating to Villejuif.

The commander of the 12th Division being informed that Von Tümpling, the general in command, had ordered the troops of this Army Corps, that stood further to the rear, to be alarmed, orders up the disposable reserves from Rungis, consisting of three battalions, four squadrons and one battery, to join in the contest at L'Hay and Chevilly. The troops of Guilhem's Brigade standing at the cross-roads give way before the storming 1st battalion of the 63rd Regiment, the two other battalions of which turn upon L'Hay.



GENERAL V. TÜMPLING.

The fierce contest at Chevilly continues. Several attempts to retake a farmstead captured by the French failed in face of their obstinate defence. Here Major Ronneberg of the 23rd Regiment fell at the head of the 7th Company. A reinforcement of the 10th Regiment joins in, the farmstead is taken and the enemy retreats in disorder upon the redoubt of Les Hautes-Bruyères; the troops of the right column still fighting at L'Hay, having been overthrown by a counter-attack, are forced to join in the retreat.

It was a day of honour for the VIth Army Corps, the more so since the French infantry had fought very well. The losses by the Prussians of 28 officers and 413 rank and file in killed and wounded, and by the French of 74 officers and 2046 killed, wounded and missing, testify to the seriousness of the struggle.

On the 5th of October King William moved his Head-Quarters to Versailles. Stronger parties of Gardes Mobiles and Francs-tireurs having appeared at the rear of the Army of the Maas, several bodies of troops had to be detached from the lines of investment to drive away or keep down these armed bands; and at the beginning of October the German Head-Quarters received news from the neighbourhood of the Loire, which rendered it necessary to send stronger forces to the south to repulse all attempts of a relieving army. The 1st Bavarian Corps and the 22nd Division were detailed for this duty; the 17th Landwehr Division and the Landwehr Division of the Guards, which were coming up, being destined to fill the places of the forces departing from before Paris. On the 10th of October the 21st Division was relieved by the 17th. The latter took up a position between the Marne and the Seine, while the



GENERAL VINOY.

21st Division placed itself between the IInd Bavarian and the Vth Army Corps from Meudon as far as Sèvres, its main body being at Cheville and the Corps Artillery at Saclay. To the Vth Army Corps was left the section from St. Cloud as far as the Seine at Croissy. St. Germain-en-Laye was occupied on the 16th of October by two battalions of the 1st Landwehr Regiment of the Guards, and Port-Marly by one battalion; the rest of the Landwehr Division of the Guards arrived at St. Germain-en-Laye on the 30th of October.

BATTLE OF BAGNEUX ON THE 13TH OCTOBER.

In the night between the 10th and 11th of October General Vinoy received a letter from Governor Trochu, in which reference was made

to the movements of troops in the district of the (German) Third Army, and also to the opinions of the Parisian public and the information obtained from prisoners to the effect that Paris was threatened with an assault; "it must not be forgotten, that the 14th of October is the anniversary of the battle of Jena and that the Prussians have great faith in anniversaries." The greatest circumspection was therefore enjoined on Vinoy, and he was promised reinforcements. When, however, in the days following, no attack was made by the Germans, Trochu assumed that all those movements within or behind the enemy's lines had only served to disguise the fact that the line of investment had been weakened by a portion of the investing army being detached and sent to the provinces. In consequence he ordered a reconnaissance to be made on the 13th of October from the line Vanves—Montrouge against Châtillon.¹ Three columns were

¹ See Sketch for 19th of September, p. 264.

to advance upon Clamart, Châtillon and Bagneux, one brigade was to cover the left flank towards Bourg-la-Reine, a second to take up a position as general reserve near Fort Montrouge; the total force for this expedition amounted to 25,000 men with 80 guns.

The attack was directed against the IInd Bavarian Corps, who were not unprepared: the reports from the outposts pointed to the conclusion that the French were making ready for some enterprise, and this view, based on the movements of the enemy, was speedily confirmed by the fire of the heavy artillery from the neighbouring forts, which regularly preceded every sally, but thereby forewarned us of it. The outposts moved into the lines of defence, whilst troops in rear were alarmed and, according to the requirements, led forward into the fight.

The 6th Bavarian Brigade had one regiment on outpost duty on the plateau of Châtillon, where they occupied the Bavarian Field-work; ¹ two battalions of the 5th Brigade, which had been resting in rear, arrived here as a first reinforcement, and the rest of the brigade came up at about 12 o'clock. The artillery of the Division took up a position partly at the edge of the plateau and partly in reserve; the guns in front were instructed not to engage with the superior artillery of the fortress, but only to fire at the enemy's troops as they advanced. The 8th Brigade had 5 battalions at Châtillon, Bagneux and Fontenay, the rest in Sceaux; the 7th Brigade stood at Bourg-la-Reine and to the south of it; the artillery reserve was at Chatenay.

At 9 o'clock the forts poured out shot in profusion, mainly upon Bagneux and Châtillon. Whilst Bourg-la-Reine was attacked only by the fire of strong lines of skirmishers the left column of the French deployed for an attack upon Bagneux; it was made by the "Gardes Mobiles" with force and intrepidity, and they captured the outskirts of the village. When, towards 11 o'clock, a French regiment of the line joined in the battle, the Bavarians, yielding to superior force, were compelled to evacuate the place and to retire on the supporting position on the road to Fontenay. Thence, with a well-aimed fire, they succeed in arresting the further advance of the French. Fresh troops being ordered up after 1 o'clock by Von Bothmer, the commander of the division, it becomes possible for the Bavarians to proceed to the reconquest of the lost positions. The barricades which the enemy have already built are cleared away, and the French, obstinately defending themselves in Bagneux, are step by step forced back towards the north.

The right column of the French took Clamart, without encountering any resistance, and the Bavarian picquets withdrew to the plateau; the French, keeping Fleury under observation, followed and prepared Clamart for defence.

The centre column of the French had advanced against Châtillon, under the protection of the fire of the forts and of the field artillery; they force an entry into the village and a fierce fight ensues around the barricades and houses there. Spite of their superior numbers, the French make headway but slowly; the fight for the possession of the barricade in the main street being specially fierce. "The Bavarians," writes Ducrot, "sheltered in the houses round, fire from very near, their bullets pour in all round us, from the loop-holed walls, from windows, roofs and ventilators; it is impossible to advance further and take the barricade." French sappers and miners

¹ See p. 269, twelfth line from top. [*Trs.*]

attempt to cut a way through the neighbouring houses, two battalions of "Gardes Mobiles" coming from Montrouge, force their way into the eastern side of Châtillon, and when three more battalions of the Line join in the fight, the scale of the brave defenders in the balance kicks the beam; they are forced to abandon the barricade and withdraw to the southern edge of the place; here the longed-for reinforcements arrive: 5 companies of the 8th Brigade have hurried up in support from Sceaux, and again house after house is recaptured from the French. Wherever possible the Bavarian artillery had taken part in the fight, but the superior effectiveness of the artillery of the forts made it impossible to bring all the batteries into play.

The object of the French reconnaissance was attained, the Germans were seen to have adequate forces in their old positions. At about 3 o'clock Vinoy ordered the retreat; the Bavarians, with a garrison at Bagneux stronger than before, reoccupied their former positions. The day cost them 10 officers and 356 rank and file; the losses of the French were probably equally high.

Ducrot remarks about this day's fight: "It is true that the positions taken had to be abandoned again, but the contests for their possession had none the less a very favourable influence on the moral tone of the defence. It was proved, that our young soldiers and Gardes Mobiles had begun their military education, and were able to stand up against an enemy who—was accustomed to conquer."

During these attacks made upon the Bavarians on the 13th of October in the south, Mont Valérien had directed the fire of its artillery of long range upon the castle of St. Cloud. The shells set on fire and reduced to a heap of ruins this beautiful historic structure, the favourite residence of Napoleon I, the former Head Quarters of Blücher in 1814 and 1815, and the very place from which Napoleon III had set out on the 27th of July of that year to join his army, never to see again either the Palace or Paris. Before our imagination rises Heidelberg on the distant banks of the Neckar, reminding us that there is in the life of nations an avenging Nemesis ordained by a Higher Power, in which we men have no conscious part.¹

Prince Adalbert of Prussia,² for whom no position suited to his rank could be found, on account of the inactivity to which our young navy was condemned by the superiority of the French, had been at the commencement of the war attached to the Head-Quarters of General von Steinmetz, and was in the beginning of October summoned to Versailles.

During the war of 1866 the Prince had given repeated proofs of his intrepidity and courage; he did the same at the battle of Gravelotte, where he was again and again seen in the foremost line, animating the troops by his presence. During his stay at Versailles he showed himself almost daily in the first line of investment where he remained for hours making observations and, if fighting ensued, taking part in the contest. In this way he had also been engaged on the 13th of October, and news was brought to Versailles that the prince had again been seen in the firing line. Being questioned why, though filling no responsible position, he thus exposed himself to the enemy's fire, he answered:

¹ In 1689 the French blew up the beautiful castle of Heidelberg. It was a wanton act of Vandalism. [*Trs.*]

² A Prussian admiral. [*Trs.*]

"If I were entrusted with some command, then I would certainly remain at my post. In my present position of mere spectator it seems to me that it is my duty as a Prussian Prince to look on, not only from the stand-point of the Head-quarters, but also from the foremost ranks in the lines of skirmishers, and at the same time to show the men that Prussian Princes gladly share their lot in the front ranks and are equally ready at all times to die for king and country. But I am not aware that I am doing anything extraordinary, seeing that I am only carrying out the instructions of my late father."

Ever since the beginning of October General Ducrot had occupied himself with the idea of cutting his way through the lines of investment and leading the forces thus set free into the provinces. The notes he took about the selection of the most suitable spot for his attempt give evidence of his minute observations, and balancing of the advantages and disadvantages of each of the ways under consideration. It is specially interesting to note that he considered it hopeless to endeavour to break through in the direction north of St. Denis, considering that the ground was carefully chosen and utilized as a defensive line of investment. He finally decided that there were but four battle-fields available for the execution of his scheme, viz., the plateau of Villejuif in the south, the peninsulas of Champigny in the south-east and Gennevilliers in the north-west, and the plain of St. Denis in the north. Among these he considered that of Gennevilliers as the fittest for his purpose. Towards the end of the month of October it was decided to make the attempt upon that peninsula. But for that purpose it was considered necessary to oppose the Germans as quickly as possible in the execution of their plan, which had become evident about the middle of October, of extending their line past the Mont Valérien northwards in the direction of Reuil, to drive them out of Malmaison and prevent their occupation of Reuil; a redoubt to be erected at Gibets was intended subsequently to cover the left flank, when the great attempt should be made. In a German ear it sounds peculiar that Ducrot, in addition to this practical object of the attack, namely, to prepare for breaking through, adds the moral object that he wished to clearly ascertain how much the troops were capable of.

A force of 10,000 men with 120 field-guns was set aside for this purpose.

BATTLE OF MALMAISON ON THE 21ST OF OCTOBER.

Supported by the fire of Mont Valérien, two columns were to move upon Malmaison, coming from the directions of Nanterre and Suresnes, and a third was to attack Buzenval Château; a detachment near Montretout was to cover the left flank, and a reserve was to be posted at Moulin-des-Gibets. This attack necessarily fell upon our Vth Corps, that is to say upon its left wing, which was formed by the 10th Division, whose front extended from Vacherie-de-St. Cucufa as far as Bougival.¹

At the Prussian outposts and from the post of observation of La Jonchère they had latterly observed numerous movements of troops, an increased traffic on the circular railway of Paris, and reconnoitrings by a French General at Reuil; these observations together with the attempts of French patrols to destroy the park walls of Malmaison led us to expect an attack at an early date. On the 21st of October the

¹ See map for the 19th Jan., p. 319.

batteries of Mont Valérien begin at 7.30 in the morning to fire very vigorously upon the positions of the 10th Division. At 12.30 the French begin to advance. This being reported at Versailles at the Head-Quarters of the Vth Corps, orders are issued to alarm the corps; troops of the XIth Army Corps undertake to protect Versailles. The 19th Brigade being placed on that day in the first line, occupies the defensive position from the Seine to the Ravin de St. Cucufa. At half-past one 120 French field-guns are ranged against the Prussian positions. A company of the 46th Regiment in the act of relieving the outposts in the park of Malmaison, retreats in face of the bodies of troops issuing about 3 o'clock from Reuil, a battery moves into the emplacements at the north-east entrance of Bougival. The French force their way into Malmaison; spite of the heavy fire of the Prussian infantry, some companies of Zouaves and Franks-tireurs succeed in crossing the gorge of Cucufa and in making good their position on the opposite slope. Buzenval is occupied by the French; they deploy more forces east of the gorge; but their attempts to advance further on the heights of La Jonchère are defeated by the fire of the defenders and the opportune arrival of their reinforcements. Along the whole front of the 10th Division a fierce and prolonged fight ensues; gradually the well-directed fire of the Prussian infantry gains the superiority over that of the French. The supports have arrived; at 4 o'clock the left wing of the 19th Brigade issues forth from their defensive positions, two Landwehr companies of the Guards, coming up from their outpost positions, join the attack and the park of Malmaison is taken. A company of the 1st Landwehr Regiment of the Guards, whose commander, in his civilian capacity, was chamberlain of the Queen-Dowager, forces a French company back against the park wall and cuts them down. The left wing of the French too, in the direction of Porte-de-Longboyau, is shaken; the 50th Regiment coming from Cucufa here joins the fight. A fierce struggle takes place for the possession of two French guns, which are bravely defended by chasseurs, franks-tireurs and artillery-men; Premier Lieutenant Michler, already in possession of the guns, falls like a hero at the head of his riflemen and of a party of the 6th Regiment under the command of Colour-Sergeant Jänisch, who had assisted them in capturing the guns; Buzenval-Château is occupied by the 50th Regiment, and the retreating French are pursued by a rapid fire. Towards 5 o'clock the musketry fire on the battlefield gradually ceases and only the heavy French artillery is yet heard, till their thunder also expires at 6 o'clock with the last shot from Mont Valérien. The Vth Army Corps lost 21 officers and 390 rank and file; the brave Landwehr of the Guards, 5 officers and 73 rank and file killed and wounded; the French lost 30 officers 470 rank and file and more than 120 unwounded prisoners.

In the church of Reuil are the monuments of the Empress Josephine and Queen Hortense. The Empress Josephine retired to Malmaison after Napoleon I had divorced her in 1809, and there she died. It seems as if fate required expiation for that deed of violence also; it was the castle of Malmaison which Napoleon I inhabited after the battle of Waterloo, and which he quitted at the approach of the Prussians from Argenteuil, in order to proceed to St. Helena.

On and after the 22nd of October, the French constructed several intrenchments on the peninsula of Gennevilliers, to aid the execution of the plan for bursting through, and earthworks were also begun opposite the Corps of the Guards. A company of this corps had been in occupation of Le Bourget ever since the 19th of September,

with orders to evacuate the place as soon as the French should attack it with considerable forces, and it was no doubt their knowledge of the weakness of the garrison which induced the French to attempt the capture of the place.

BATTLE OF LE BOURGET ON THE 30TH OF OCTOBER.



LE BOURGET.

(After a contemporary sketch by C. Freyberg.)

On the 24th and 25th of October brilliant northern lights were seen, and these were followed by a heavy downpour. Early on October the 27th there was also a heavy storm, accompanied by much rain, when the *Francs-tireurs* of the press, about 250 men, coming from Courneuve, rushed upon Le Bourget. The Prussian outposts retreated fighting, and evacuated the place when two more battalions of the enemy arrived. The French at once prepared the place for defence; some French artillery coming from St. Denis, with the intention of firing upon the retreating Prussian company, were very soon compelled to beat a retreat themselves by the batteries of the Guards, which had taken up a position at Pont-Iblon. The French also occupied Drancy. Le Bourget was held by five battalions and some artillery; Fort Aubervilliers was ordered to fire on all the troops that should make their appearance there, whilst the forces located at Drancy were to fall on the flank of any force attacking Le Bourget. Ducrot's utterances cast interesting side-lights upon the state of affairs in Paris. Trochu clearly saw the dangerous and isolated position of the place, which kept a strong garrison engaged to no good purpose; nevertheless he did not venture to order its evacuation. He had to take public opinion into account; the news that the *Francs-tireurs* of the press had been the heroes of the day had roused the enthusiastic admiration of the Parisians, and they would have raised the cry of "Treason" had any one attempted to depreciate the value of the possession of Le Bourget.

On the evening of the very next day, the 28th of October, the 2nd Division of the Guards made an attempt to reoccupy the village, but being undertaken by a single battalion only, it failed owing to the watchfulness and the fire of the French. On the morning of the 29th of October several batteries of the Corps of the Guards bombarded Le Bourget; this, however, led to no particular result. In the afternoon strong columns of the enemy, supported by a heavy artillery fire from the forts by St. Denis, attacked the 1st Division of the Guards, but were repulsed. The news arrived of the capitulation of Metz, and was received with great exultation.

In accordance with the orders of the commander of the 2nd Division of the

Guards, the garrisons of the villages lying in the line of defence from Le Blanc-Mesnil as far as Stains, with the outposts, were, on the 30th October, to remain in their positions; nine battalions of infantry, two and a half companies of rifle-men of the Guards, and a company of pioneers, supported by cavalry, were to advance in three columns from the west, north and east and to attack Le Bourget. Whilst the infantry was marching up, five batteries were to hotly bombard the place, so as to retain the enemy's rifle-men as long as possible behind their shelters. The disposable troops of the 1st Division of the Guards were held in readiness at Garges and north of it, to support, if need be, the right of the position held by the Division at Stains; while the 23rd Division were similarly prepared at Aulnay. At 8 o'clock in the morning, in gloomy foggy weather, the batteries opened fire from Pont-Iblon upon Le Bourget.

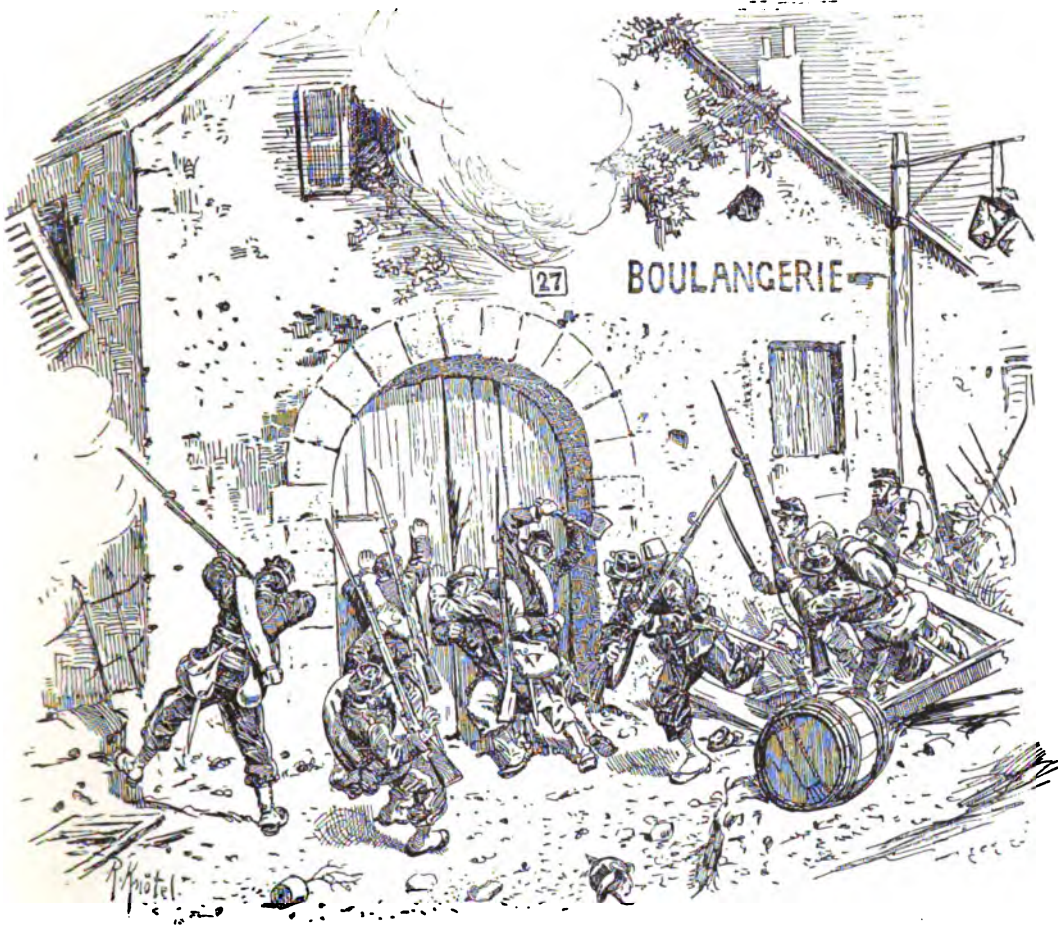


Sketch for the battles round Le Bourget on 30th October and 21st December.

The left Column, consisting of two battalions of the Regiment Alexander and rifle-men—advances, two batteries, which were allotted to them, take up a position south-west of Le Blanc-Mesnil. The infantry crosses the brook Mollette, the rifle-men of the Guards undertake the protection of the artillery and turn north of the brook against Le Bourget. A fierce fire of artillery and small arms receives the advancing infantry; two companies, destined to cover the left flank towards Drancy, hurl

themselves upon the French infantry which hold the railway embankment, and drive them back, part to Le Bourget and part to Drancy. The Alexander battalions wheel round and advance to the assault; infantry and rifle-men force their way into Le Bourget. At 8 o'clock the whole southern part of the place is in the hands of the Regiment Alexander and of the 1st company of rifle-men of the Guards. Supported by the two batteries, which had moved up nearer to the enemy, the troops covering the flank towards Drancy, and those that had made good their footing at the southern edge of Le Bourget, were enabled to repulse repeated attacks of the enemy from the south and thus to prevent the bringing up of reinforcements to the defenders of the village. *The centre Column* began to advance at a quarter-past eight in two lines. The forts fired upon the Prussian infantry; but when the first musket-shots were fired from Le Bourget the artillery ceased to direct its fire at the entrance to the village in order not to imperil their own troops. The ground being sodden with the previous

rain, checks the rapid advance; 800 paces outside the village the men halt for a short while; this halt is put an end to by the word of command of Colonel Count Kanitz: "Entrance to the village to be taken by column." The bugle sounds "Advance rapidly," the men emulously run forward, shouting loud hurrahs. Captain von Renthe-Fink falls, being shot through the head, within a short distance of the barricade that blocks the entrance, and shots also fall among the troops in rear; the standard-bearer of the 2nd battalion of the Regiment Elizabeth, Sergeant Hübner, 7th company, falls



severely wounded, and Grenadier Harbig of the same company runs up and carries the standard forward, till he too drops with a deadly wound. The French abandon the barricade, and a hail of lead is poured out over the heads of the storming party. Pioneers make breaches in the walls, and the men halt for a short while at the barricade; suddenly, upon a signal given by the officers, the barricade is surmounted and the attacking party turn right and left against the houses, gardens and farms held by the French. Assisted by the pioneers, who break through a great number of walls, house after house is taken. A furious contest ensues; both Colonel Count

Kanitz and Colonel von Zaluskowski have crossed the barricade and are now guiding the struggle within the village; Colonel von Zalukowski is shot dead. Now the second line, commanded by Colonel Count Waldersee, arrives at Le Bourget, the battalion of fusiliers of the Regiment Elizabeth presses in from the north, and that of Queen Augusta's Regiment from the north-east; jointly with the riflemen of the Guards, who have taken by rush the eastern edge of the village, two companies of Grenadiers storm some of the houses and gardens east of the main street. Count Waldersee, who only a few days previously had returned healed from a severe wound received at St. Privat, falls a victim to the street-fight. His men had observed the rifleman at the window of a dwelling-house, and they forced an entry with reckless fury. No quarter was given, and Frenchmen subsequently made prisoners recognized the corpse of the rifleman as that of young Baroche, son of the keeper of the Great Seal, who commanded a French battalion and whom the French report to have committed suicide. Captain von Trotha also died the death of a hero. The contest proceeded, man fighting against man. "The village," writes Chuquet, "resembled a slaughter-house. Blood flowed in torrents and the walls were bespattered with human brains."

The Column on the right wing, consisting of two battalions of the Regiment Franz, detached a party to observe Courneuve, and advancing from Dugny, forced an entrance into Le Bourget; Captain von Obstfelder was killed at the barricade in the main street of the village; a standard was captured, and communication with the other columns established. Here too we witness a furious fight from house to house, the church, bravely defended by the enemy, is taken; some non-commissioned officers climbed up the windows, tore down the wire-netting and leapt into the church, the men following the heroic example thus set them.

At 10 o'clock the obstinate resistance in the northern part of Le Bourget had not yet been wholly overcome, and therefore Von Budritzki, the commander of the division, who was on the spot, ordered the left column to attack from the south. A new conflict ensues for the possession of the houses north of some glassworks, situated about the centre of the village;—when suddenly the enemy's bugles are heard; they cease firing and surrender. At noon the resistance is wholly overcome, and Le Bourget, now hotly bombarded by the forts, is again in the hands of the Germans.

From the position held by the 1st Division of the Guards it was possible to overlook the considerable bodies of French soldiers who ran away during the battle; three to four battalions coming up from St. Denis towards Le Bourget were arrested by the fugitives, and returned with them. We could distinctly see French officers opposing their men and endeavouring to stop them, but it was all in vain. Even the appearance of a superior officer, coming with his staff from St. Denis, was powerless to arrest the movement. It is worth mentioning that the French, when they speak of the 30th of October, lay stress on the fact that the Prussians had in their attack employed a new method of fighting; as such they regarded the skilful advance by rushes of the infantry and of the rifles of the Guards. The 2nd Division of the Guards lost 34 officers and 433 rank and file in killed and wounded; the enemy left 1200 prisoners in our hands; his other losses are not known. Le Bourget received a garrison of two battalions.

IN AND ROUND PARIS.

"The enemy outside our lines of fortification," writes Ducrot, "was not the only one we had to contend with; within our walls there was the Revolution. After the 4th of September every day brought new manifestations; now it was a patriotic excursion to the statue of Strassburg,¹ then a visit to the Hôtel de Ville or the Louvre to demand in the name of the people that certain civil or military measures should be taken."

The cry for the Commune became the watchword of the populace. All Paris was deeply moved when, on

the 31st of October, it became known that Thiers had arrived to conclude an armistice, and that Metz and Le Bourget had fallen. Chuquet reports that "the National Guards reversed their arms as a sign that they would not move, and would without using their arms witness the overthrow of the men of the 4th of September and the formation of a bolder and more resolute government. Large mobs crowd up to the Hôtel de Ville, where the Mayors representing the different Paris districts, and the Members of the Government are assembled. Trochu is accused of causing the loss of Le Bourget and of being the author of the proposal for an armistice. The Mayors demand direct election of a municipal council, the Commune; and the Members of the Government concur in principle. During the afternoon the riflemen of Belleville, under Flourens, burst in the doors of the hall of the session; Trochu, Favre and the other members of the government are surrounded; being crowded up against the window-ledges, insulted, and threatened with guns levelled at them, they steadfastly refuse to resign. Amidst an enormous tumult the deposition of Trochu and his colleagues is proclaimed."



GRAVES OF FRENCH SOLDIERS AT PETIT-PLESSIS.

The Hôtel de Ville is in the hands of the insurgents. But a part of the National Guards begin to reflect more calmly, and coming to their senses, the 106th Battalion, open the way to the Hôtel de Ville and set Trochu free. Ducrot proposes to restore order in Paris with his troops on whom he could rely, to advance energetically against the insurgents, to destroy them, and also set free the other members of the Government; Trochu orders that the revolt is to be suppressed by the National Guards alone; this was done, and towards the evening all the members of the Government were free, again. Upon the motion of the Government a plebiscite was held on the 3rd of November; 559,000 voting for, and 62,000 against the retention of the men of the 4th of September in their places.

The events in Paris were not unknown to the several bodies of troops in the German Lines of Investment. Deserters, who came over to us, spoke of the armistice

¹ On the "Place de la Concorde." [Trs.]

as a settled affair, the people being anxious for peace. Thousands of men, women and children ventured close up to our outposts, to look for potatoes. Even officers approached our sentinels, so that at last it became necessary to drive the French back with musket-shots if they would not obey our beckonings and shoutings. Those potato-collectors brought us newspapers from Paris, which confirmed the vague reports that had reached our ears; but also—characteristically enough of the temper of the Parisians—there was no lack of witticisms in the papers. About the fall of Metz, by which Bazaine was made prisoner, as MacMahon had been made at Sedan, one paper wrote: "Enfin Bazaine a opéré sa jonction avec l'armée de MacMahon";¹ about Trochu: "Un militaire, qui trempe son sabre dans l'encre et sa plume dans le fourreau de son sabre;"² about Rochefort: "Un camarade qu'on aimerait mieux voir chez le voisin;"³ about Arago: "Une voix qui résonne, et un esprit qui n'a jamais raisonné."⁴ A newspaper announces that at a certain butcher's shop a fat dog, completely trussed by the butcher, was to be had for 20 francs, and adds: "Pauvres chiens! voilà une saison qui s'annonce pour eux sous d'assez tristes auspices—sans compter que les chats ne seront pas plus favorisés."⁵ The negotiations for an armistice carried on by Thiers again failed, the French still misunderstanding their own position, and the obvious necessity of the German demands.

Although at the end of September, when the investment of the Capital was complete, the view was generally entertained, that a formal siege like that of Metz would not be necessary for the reduction of Paris, nevertheless all preparations had been so far made that this measure could be at once entered upon, if it should appear necessary. In any case it was considered necessary to supply the Army of Investment with siege-artillery. The existing siege-train was for the moment at work outside Strassburg, and was not disposable even after the fall of that fortress in view of other sieges that had to be undertaken; a new siege-train of 245 guns was therefore collected from the Prussian fortresses. A reconnaissance of the fortress undertaken in the early days of October, shewed that the most suitable direction for an attack was towards the south-west, viz., the forts of Issy, Vanves and Montrouge. At the same time it was considered advantageous to direct a supplementary attack against the north-west front from the peninsula of Gennevilliers, but for that purpose the peninsula had first to be taken. The siege-train of 245 guns arrived, but considering the artillery force of the enemy opposing it, it barely sufficed for the attack on the south.

Although the bringing up of the siege-train from home had been ordered and commenced at once, still the rapid execution of the order encountered the greatest difficulties; the tunnel at Nanteuil having been destroyed, it was necessary to unload the trucks and to carry the guns and materials by vehicles to the park of Villacoublay.

¹ "At last Bazaine has effected his junction with the army of MacMahon."

² "A soldier who dips his sword in ink and his pen in his scabbard."

³ "A comrade one would rather see at his neighbour's."

⁴ "A voice which resounds and a mind which never reasons"; a pun on "résonne" and "raisonné" somewhat like: His voice was all sound and his reason was unsound.

⁵ "Poor dogs! Here is a season which opens for them under auspices sufficiently sad for them—without taking into consideration that cats will no longer be the greater favourites." A pun on "favorisé", meaning "favoured" and also "whiskered." [Trs.]

a distance of 12 (German) miles (upwards of 50 English miles). The extraordinarily large number of teams required for the transport was not to be had. It was only at the end of October that all the guns and vehicles arrived; the transport of the ammunition caused the greatest delay. So unfavourable were the circumstances that even at the end of November only a part of the ammunition had arrived. Some improvement was effected when, about that time, the unloading-station was moved forward to Lagny and the journey by road was considerably shortened; still the whole month of December passed by before the ammunition was fully brought up. The drifting ice on the Seine had caused great delay.

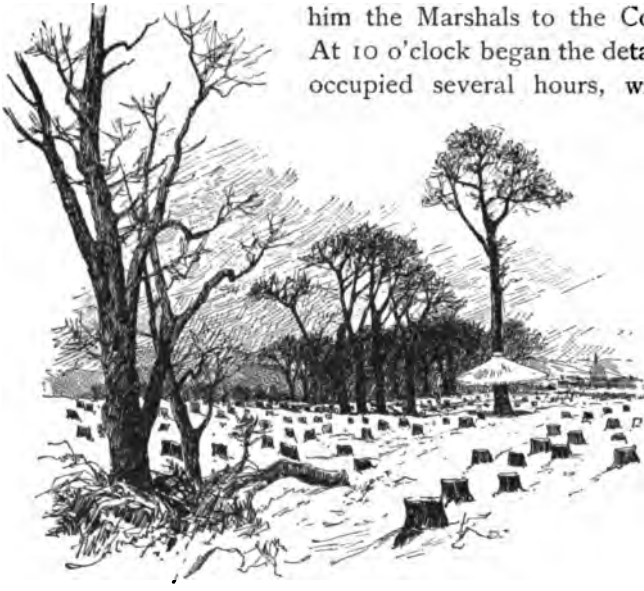
From the first day of the investment the French artillery greatly galled the German troops by their fire, and this kept on steadily increasing. Under the cover of this fire, the defenders kept pushing their first line further and further forward, repossessed themselves along the whole circle of investment of points previously abandoned, fortified them and even brought heavy artillery into action in order to make their superiority in artillery felt far beyond the original zone. Thus it came about that the strong intrenchments in the peninsula of Gennevilliers, and the reinforcement of the north-west front with heavy artillery, subsequently induced the Germans to abandon all idea of making an attack in that quarter, and to plan instead an attack from St. Denis in the north.

Meanwhile, however, the aggressive activity of the French made it necessary to send some siege-artillery in another direction.

Events in rear of the lines of investment had led to several alterations in the disposition of the troops of the Army of Investment. After the fall of Metz the IInd Army Corps had moved to Paris and had been incorporated with the Third Army; one division of it had taken up its position at Longjumeau, and the other relieved the 17th Division, which stood between Seine and Marne and was added to the forces under the command of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. The unfavourable issue of the battle of Coulmiers on the 9th of November caused some further displacements; the IInd Army Corps was placed in reserve, behind the other sections of the Third Army, and the Württembergers were subordinated to the Commander of the Army of the Maas and occupied the section of the lines of investment evacuated by the IInd Army Corps. To support them a part of the Saxon Army Corps was moved to the left bank of the Marne, and after the end of November the 7th Brigade occupied Villeneuve-St. Georges. The news received at the Chief Head-Quarters, especially the information brought by the newspapers, that in all the streets of Paris, leading to the east, the barricades had been removed, and the reported increase of activity on the circular railway of Paris, all seemed to indicate that a sally towards the east would soon be attempted with a considerable force.

For King William, who was in his 74th year, the time in Versailles was anything but a time of repose, and often there were days when His Majesty had not time to take a drive in his carriage for a breath of fresh air, or even to visit some military post in the positions round Paris. In the month of October he spent his day somewhat as follows:

Rise at half-past seven; first breakfast at 8 o'clock, then immediately to work at his study table, which lay covered with letters and telegrams. At 9 o'clock the Aide-de-Camp on duty entered to make reports and receive orders; immediately after



THE BOIS DE BOULOGNE WITH THE STUMPS OF THE TREES
THAT HAD BEEN CUT DOWN.

him the Marshals to the Court, often also the Head Equerry. At 10 o'clock began the detailed official reports, which generally occupied several hours, with a pause of 5—10 minutes for the second breakfast. From two to half-past three carriage exercise; at 4 o'clock dinner, to which about 30 persons were generally invited. After dinner His Majesty as a rule remained alone, but always at his desk, to dispose of his voluminous correspondence. At 9 o'clock tea, in a circle more limited than at dinner; soon after 10 o'clock His Majesty retired.

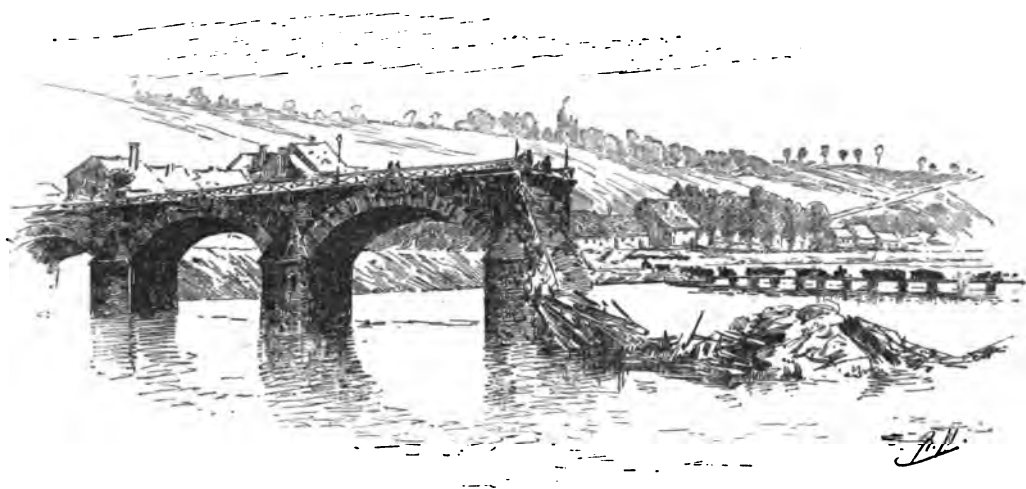
Such was the rule, but there were frequent exceptions, as for example the 23rd of October, which was passed as follows:

At 9 o'clock Divine Service in the Palace-Church; immediately afterwards, presentation of one officer, one colour-sergeant, 10 non-commissioned officers and privates of the 6th and 50th Infantry Regiments, who had captured two guns from the enemy at a fight in the sally of the 21st; the King gave to each the Iron Cross, and then examined the two pieces of artillery, which were placed in the court of the palace, near the statue of Louis XIV.

By this time it was half-past ten, and as soon as his Majesty entered the palace, the detailed Official Reports began; first the so-called General Report, then that of the Privy-Counsellor Abeken of the Foreign Office; the military news, and the reports of the Chief of the Military Cabinet, followed by that of the Chief of the Civil Cabinet; to conclude with an audience to General von Suckow, the Württemberg Minister of War. Now it was 4 o'clock. After dinner, audience to General von Prankh, the Bavarian Minister of War, and lastly the report of Count Bismarck, the Chancellor of the Confederation; after this came tea, in which Bismarck joined.

In Paris Trochu had ordered on the 6th of November a new distribution of the forces. Three Armies were formed. The First, consisting of 266 Battalions of National Guards, one legion of cavalry and one of artillery, and amounting in all to 130,000 men, was put under the command of General Clément Thomas; the Second, organized in three Corps and one Division of Cavalry, numbered 100,000 men with 300 guns, and was composed only of men of the Line and a few battalions of Gardes Mobiles, under the command of Ducrot; the Third 70,000 strong, under Vinoy, consisted of 7 Divisions of Infantry and one of Cavalry, being almost exclusively Gardes Mobiles. In St. Denis lay three Brigades, 30,000 strong, commanded by the Vice-Admiral La Roncière Le Noury. If to these are added 80,000 Gardes Mobiles engaged as garrisons of the forts and other fortifications, it is found that at the end of November the Capital was defended by more than 400,000 men.

When, on the 14th of November, a despatch of Gambetta's announced in Paris the favourable issue of the battle of Coulmiers, the plan to break through at Gennevilliers was abandoned, in spite of General Ducrot's earnest remonstrance, and an attempt to break through in the south, to join the Army of the Loire, was taken into consideration. Accordingly an enterprise long prepared was to be given up, in order to take a direction where the French would encounter considerable forces of the enemy, and enter a district which was already stripped of the means of sustenance for man and horse. Reconnaissances made by Ducrot personally, confirmed the view that the present position of the Germans in the south would present great obstacles, in consequence of the defensive arrangements there having been constantly improved, and that the attack would certainly be at once met by the arrival of reinforcements from Versailles and the neighbouring Corps. On the other hand the enemy seemed to have paid less attention to the tract of land in the south-east between Noisy-le-Grand and Chennevières, feeling safe behind the Marne. Making use of the abundant means



BRIDGE AT CORBEIL, SOUTH OF PARIS, BLOWN UP.

for constructing bridges, which was at their disposal, they determined on the 29th of November to make feints in several other places, and to suddenly cross the Marne to secure a firm footing on its left bank before the enemy's reinforcements could arrive, then to break through with all their forces in an easterly direction and subsequently to move southwards.

From the 27th of November onwards the positions of the Württembergers and of the VIth Army Corps were hotly bombarded and contests against the outposts of this corps took place. On the 28th the Second Army of the French took up a position at Vincennes and north of it; during the night preceding the 29th a Division of Vinoy's Army occupied Mont Avron and planted there 50 heavy guns; the armament of forts Nogent and Charenton was strengthened. The construction of bridges planned for the same night encountered difficulties; the attack was therefore put off for 24 hours, and the execution of the feints intended for the 29th was left to the discretion of the respective commanders.

One of these feints was actually made on the 29th, against the positions of the VIth Army Corps, which cost the French 1000 men, and was stopped by Vinoy when, during the actual progress of the engagement, he was informed of the changed situation in the east, in consequence of the movements being delayed for 24 hours. The Vth Army Corps also was attacked by considerable bodies which advanced in the direction of Garges and Malmaison, but were repulsed. Opposed to our VIth Army Corps was a Division of soldiers of the Line, the only ones allotted to Vinoy's Army. The difference in the colours of the trousers in the French Army, those of the Line being always red, never failed to inform us, by the position assigned to the men of the Line, where the enemy meant to deal his principal blow. Early on the 29th orders were issued that when sallies on a large scale were made it was to be ascertained as soon as possible whether Gardes Mobiles or troops of the Line were facing us, and that the news should forthwith be wired to the Great Head-Quarters at Versailles, to enable it to determine whether the sally was serious or a mere feint.

BATTLE OF VILLIERS, 30TH OF NOVEMBER TO 3RD OF DECEMBER.



WÜRTTEMBERG JÄGER.

The failure to build a bridge had caused the greatest consternation among the French Generals; there was the more cause for this, as the orders for the advance of Ducrot's army, given down to the minutest details, ¹ had to be speedily countermanded, as the Germans could not fail to notice the concentration of large masses of troops in the east, and would almost certainly take speedy measures to reinforce the Württembergers; but, above all, they dreaded the bad impression made on the troops and on the Parisians.

The Ist and IInd Corps of Ducrot's Army had stopped in and around Vincennes, and only Susbille's Division had been pushed forward to Créteil, with a view to advancing southwards on the 30th and so preventing reinforcements reaching the Württembergers stationed at Villiers—Champigny. The IIIrd Corps had advanced to the region north of Rosny and there pitched a camp, the tents of which were visible at a great distance. Under the protection of the fire of the heavy artillery of Mont Avron and of the forts and intrenchments of St. Maur, all of which commanded the peninsula of Champigny, the passage of the Marne was to be effected early on the 30th, as soon as the bridges should be finished; the Ist and IInd Corps were to cross the river at Joinville, the IIIrd Corps was from the side of Rosny to seize upon Neuilly-sur-Marne, and then to cross over by the bridges north of Bry (Brie). Whilst the two former Corps were to attack the German position from in front, the IIIrd Corps was ordered, after having crossed the river, to turn upon Noisy-le-Grand, to seize the heights there, and then to attack the defenders of Villiers from the rear.

¹ Our readers will have observed that German Generals were allowed great freedom of action on their own initiative. [*Trs.*]

Early on the 29th there was in Noisy-le-Grand and east of it a brigade of Saxon infantry with 12 guns and some squadrons, and a Württemberg brigade with 18 guns and cavalry was on the line Villiers—Coeuilly—Champigny:

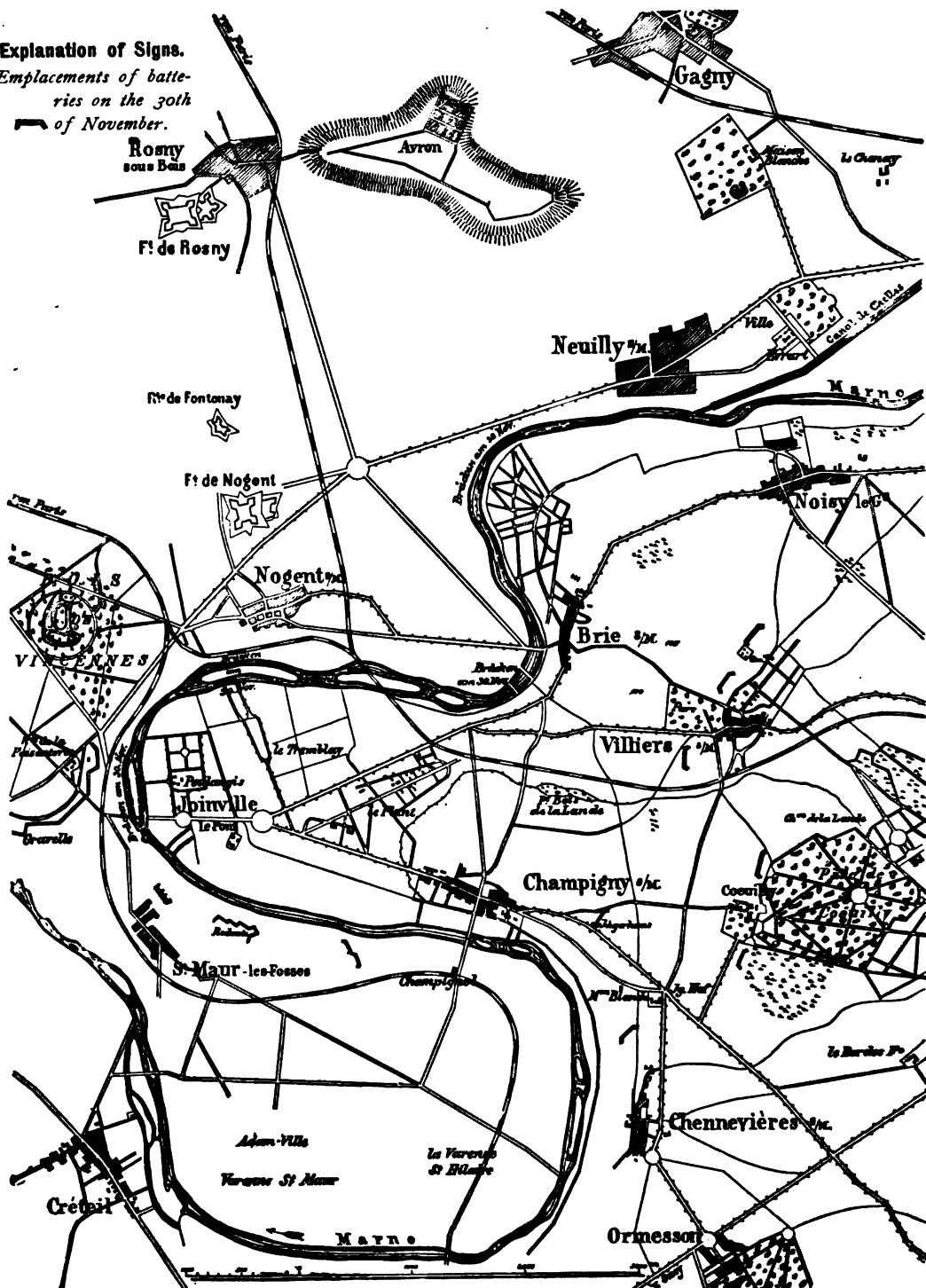
The news which arrived early on the 29th from the army of Prince Frederick Charles about the combat at Beaune-la-Rolande, which had led to a displacement of the French forces on the Loire in an easterly direction, increased the probability of an attempt being made by the Paris Army to force a passage towards the south or south-east. The Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Maas was instructed therefore, to support, if need be, the Württembergers with all disposable forces. But the reports coming in about French troops being massed at Rosny, and about other movements of the enemy, made it appear unadvisable to move any of the Saxon troops, which were standing in readiness the whole of the 29th, across the Marne at once. It was soon ordered that the rest of the 24th Division should on the 30th of November move to the left bank of the Marne and occupy the ground as far as Champigny, whilst the Württemberg Division should defend the ground from here as far as the Seine. The Saxon Corps Artillery was moved from the left bank of the Marne nearer to the bridges, so as to be able more readily to support the 24th Division.

Accordingly, on the morning of the 30th of November no change had been made in the strength of the German troops on the threatened line Champigny—Noisy-le-Grand. At dawn the Saxons had relieved the outposts of the Württembergers at Champigny and to the north of it; the Württembergers in Villiers and Coeuilly still remained at their posts.

By half-past eight in the morning the 1st and 2nd French Corps had effected their passage at Joinville. A continuous, truly deafening artillery fire, such as was not heard even at Sedan, accompanied the approach of the French masses. "The whole country in front of us," writes Ducrot, "was ploughed up by numerous shells, which crossing one another in every direction seemed to open a road for our soldiers." The Divisions of Faron and Malroy of the 1st Corps advance on both sides of the road to Champigny; the Divisions of Berthaut and Maussion of the 2nd Corps deploy on their left. The Saxon outposts standing at Le Plant are attacked by the vanguard of Maussion's Division and fall back upon Villiers. The French Division crosses the railway-line and reaches the plateau of Villiers at 10 o'clock. A company of Saxons in Bry-sur-Marne, unobserved and unattacked, under skilful guidance escapes the danger of being cut off. Berthaut's Division advances on both sides of the line of railway, and Malroy's Division advances north of Champigny, keeping in line with it. The advanced guard of Faron's Division had reached Champigny in the dusk of morning; the Saxon companies on outpost duty having been but a short time there had, in presence of the outflanking attack of the French, to withdraw to the Jägerhaus. A Württemberg battery planted there fires with effect on Faron's Division; the German guns being in a more elevated position and in an intrenchment were able to defeat two French batteries. When at last the French, who had suffered somewhat severely, and were unable to remain inactive within the range of our fire, ascended the slopes of Coeuilly, the Württemberg battery is forced to leave its position. Meanwhile the Württembergers on that wing occupy with great rapidity the Jägerhof and the defensive position of Coeuilly. Batteries of Malroy's Division engage in a contest against the Württemberg batteries at Villiers and Coeuilly.

Explanation of Signs.

Emplacements of batteries on the 30th of November.



BATTLE OF VILLIERS.
(Scale: about 1 inch to 1 Eng. mile.)

When the Saxon outposts, who had withdrawn, bring news to Villiers of the approach of the French, the excellent defences prepared there are occupied by the Württembergers; there was no time to lose, for the French are already ascending the valley slopes of Bry, and fire of artillery and of small arms is directed upon Villiers. When at about 10 o'clock the skirmishers of Maussion's Division make the attempt, by quitting their covered position along the slopes, to advance upon Villiers they are repulsed by a destructive fire. At 10 o'clock the French are posted in the line from Bry to the Marne, east of Champigny, which latter place they put in a state of defence. "Our men," writes Ducrot, "having crowned the heights of Villiers and Coeuilly, at the first rush, so to speak, are arrested by terrible obstacles."

Reports about these events are hurriedly sent north and south to the Saxon and the other Württemberg troops; pointing out the urgent need of speedy support. But in the south the disposable Württemberg forces were themselves engaged in resisting a French attack from Créteil, whilst the Saxons in the north, on the right bank of the Marne, seemed to be threatened with an attack of the IIIrd Corps of the French. In the meantime the Saxons could only spare six companies to be sent as assistance to the position at Villiers; covered by cavalry, a Saxon battery is also hurried up.

Ducrot throws forward artillery on to the plateau of Villiers; "it is received by a hot fire from Villiers and Coeuilly; one battery is compelled to turn back before it has time to unlimber; forced by the unfavourableness of the ground to approach too near Villiers, other batteries are swept away before they can fire a shot;" only a few batteries placed more favourably, maintain their position at the southern edge of the plateau, within short range of the lines of defence of Villiers.

Longingly Ducrot looks out for the appearance of his IIIrd Corps, which, however, at 11 o'clock had not so much as begun to cross the Marne; "it was impossible," says Ducrot, "to remain any longer without stirring under the terrible fire of Villiers; our artillery suffered most keenly; our infantry, passive in the midst of a rain of bullets, became restive; there was no help for it, the attack had to be made quickly, and the Commander-in-Chief hurries his troops forward upon the park of Villiers."

A continuous musketry-fire receives Maussion's Division, whose infantry advances steadily firing. The shells of the Württemberg batteries hit the dense masses of the enemy; animated by their officers, the French rush forward with conspicuous bravery; from minute to minute their losses increase; from the park-wall the bullets of the infantry rain upon the storming party, who halt before this murderous fire and fling themselves to the ground. Once more rushing with renewed fury upon the German positions, they are finally overthrown, and stream back to the cover afforded by the plateau. This assault cost the French 500 killed and wounded, including two Commanders of Regiments!

A like fate overtakes a brigade of Berthaut's Division, which supports the assault from the south and advances along the line of railway. After a combat with varying fortune, waged for the possession of some quarries south of the park of Villiers, the Württembergers, supported by two sections of Saxon infantry and by the effective fire of their artillery at Coeuilly, repulse the French Brigade. General Berthaut orders the retreat. On this part of the battlefield also the great number of killed and wounded officers and men, of the latter alone more than 400, testify to the valour and resolution of the French.

At about 11 o'clock their infantry has sought the cover afforded by slopes of the ground; they are still in possession of the heights 100 and 109 in front of Villiers, and of the position at the Jägerhaus in front of the German left wing. The French line of artillery posted between Bry and Champigny receives reinforcements, part of which only get into position after suffering heavy losses from the batteries at Villiers and Coeuilly. Two French batteries repeatedly attempt to take up a position at the Jägerhaus, but every attempt fails in presence of the superior artillery and musketry fire of the Württembergers. At the second attempt their guns lose in a few minutes 2 officers, more than 30 men and 40 horses; one gun is disabled. At last some reinforcement, albeit a weak one, consisting of two companies and a battery, approaches the Germans from the south; General von Obernitz, the Commander of the Württemberg Division, had sent them to Chennevières as support.

The first Saxon reinforcements from Noisy have just arrived at Villiers, when two companies of the Württembergers attack height 100 in front of them. They are immediately supported by four sections of Saxon infantry, advancing along the northern side of Villiers. The height is taken at the first rush, but the strong line of French skirmishers crouching behind the slopes near Bry, opens so fierce a fire upon them, that the Germans suffer grievous loss and are forced to fall back upon Villiers. Within ten minutes the Saxons lose all their officers and half their men. The coming into action of some Saxon batteries, which opened fire from Noisy against the edge of the plateau held by the French, makes itself felt during this retreat and afterwards with steadily increasing effect.

Colonel von Abendroth, the Commander of the 48th Brigade of Saxon Infantry, had arrived at Villiers after 11 o'clock. Convinced of the great importance of the height 109, to maintain the position of Villiers, he determined to dislodge the French from it. This resolve coincided with the intention of the Württemberg General von Reitzenstein, whom Colonel von Abendroth met at Villiers, and who also had determined to make an attack. Further Saxon reinforcements make their appearance, a regiment of the 47th Brigade; a part of these are sent to the defence of Villiers, to support the Württemberg and Saxon infantry there, who are perfectly exhausted. Already the Württembergers began to run short of ammunition for artillery and infantry; two Saxon batteries take up a position south of Villiers.

The artillery of Faron's French Division had just arrived east of Champigny, on the heights of the Jägerhaus on the road to Coeuilly; here too strong lines of skirmishers occupied the edge of the plateau, when shortly after 12 o'clock the Württembergers made the attack ordered by General von Reitzenstein.

The attacking party compels the French artillery

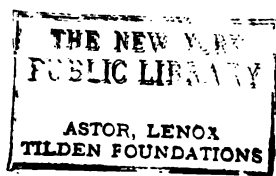


OFFICER OF THE GARDE-MOBILE.



ATTACK OF THE QUEEN OLGA GRENADIER REGIMENT IN THE PARK OF COEUILLY, 30TH NOV., 1870.

[face p. 298.



to withdraw, but they themselves soon come within range of the destructive fire of the French chassepots. Colonel von Berger, the Commander, falls mortally wounded, the thin line of the Germans is unable to hold out against this overwhelming fire; the Württembergers having heroically got to within 150 metres (= about 160 yards) of the enemy, are compelled to retreat to Coeuilly. Immediately the French infantry appears on the plateau and proceeds to make a counter-attack. Amidst fearful losses the Württembergers reach the park of Coeuilly; thanks to the rapidity of the troops, the park-wall which had been left unoccupied was again manned by riflemen, who forthwith poured a destructive fire upon the French ere they succeeded in rushing into Coeuilly, together with the retreating Württembergers.

Whilst these events were in progress the attack by three Württemberg companies, made from the Jägerhof, had been more successful. Supported by advancing artillery, they overthrow the French at the Jägerhaus, who rush back to Champigny. The Brigade-Major of the Württemberg Brigade, who was on the spot, notices the imperilled position of the troops at Coeuilly; at his suggestion the Württemberg companies wheel to the right and fall upon the flank of the French attack; this was the moment at which the Saxon batteries appeared south of Villiers and joined in the contest. The combined fire of artillery and infantry tears down whole groups of Frenchmen; in that dense mass every bullet finds its billet; their movement is arrested; there is heard the "Hurrah!" of the Württembergers, who approach at the double from the Jägerhof, and in the open field it becomes a hand-to-hand fight. The French are unable to stand the shock, their regiments, battalions, and companies are mixed up in confusion. "This mass of men," remarks Ducrot, "pressed together in too narrow a space is overwhelmed by a fearful fire of musketry and artillery, and in a few minutes the ground is covered with dead and wounded; amidst a crushing fire from every quarter our soldiers retreat behind the edge of the height, and some escape to Champigny." The 42nd Regiment alone, fighting with special valour, leaves behind 800 dead and wounded. According to Ducrot this assault cost the French a great number of officers and more than 2000 rank and file!

The attack of the Saxons against the height 109 north-west of Villiers was equally successful. Hotly fired upon by the French artillery, including that on Mont Avron, and subsequently coming within the range of infantry fire, six Saxon companies take the height from Maussion's French Division, capture two guns, which, however, could unfortunately not be brought away from want of horses, and arrive at Bry. Two battalions of the regiment of the 47th Brigade, which had arrived at Villiers, are sent to reinforce the position,—height 109, park of Villiers—and they take part in the contest. At half-past one news arrives from Noisy that the French were throwing bridges across the Marne, north of Bry, and this necessitated a more effective occupation of the position at Noisy. The infantry fire slackens, whilst the artillery contest still continues. General Ducrot, in consequence of the non-arrival of his third Corps,



SAXON RIFLEMAN.

had determined to postpone all further attacks till next day, and meanwhile secure the conquered positions.

It is past one o'clock. General Ducrot had also ordered up his reserve artillery, but his preponderance in the number of guns is compensated for by the better and more elevated position of the German batteries. But the losses of the latter also are great; one Saxon battery in a short time loses more than half its men. The guns of the IIIrd French Corps have now been joining in for some time, from the right bank of the Marne, and sweep the country between the Marne, Noisy, Bry and Villiers.

The IIIrd French Corps had started in the morning at 5 o'clock from Rosny; Bellemare's Division deployed towards Neuilly, bombarded this unoccupied place, then moved its infantry forward and occupied it; Mattat's Division took up a position east of Fort Nogent, at half-past seven.

Under cover of six batteries the building of the bridges is begun at 10 o'clock. At 11 o'clock the bridges at Bry are to be finished; but the place where they are being built is exposed to the bullets of the Germans; the civilians engaged in the work run away, and the building is interrupted for a time. At a quarter-past eleven the IIIrd Corps is ordered to hasten its advance. The bridges at Neuilly are finished at 12 o'clock, but d'Exéa, the Commander of the Corps, hesitates to cross over, as at that very time the Saxons have victoriously driven the left wing of the French back beyond the Marne, and even get to Bry. Even after the order had been repeated d'Exéa felt great doubts, saying that he could certainly attack the Saxons from their rear, but might easily be assailed himself and hurled back against the bridges; his apprehensions indeed went so far that he even recalled to the right bank those portions of his corps that had already crossed over. It is two o'clock ere the first troops of Bellemare's Division cross the Marne.

The French Division, deploying in the direction of Neuilly, led us to expect an attack on the right bank against the Saxons posted there, but the inactivity of the enemy seemed to point rather to a feint than to a serious conflict. At half-past one Prince George of Saxony, being convinced that the important part of the day's work lay on the left bank of the Marne, orders that all the disposable troops of the 24th Division should be concentrated there; a field-division of the Corps Artillery was, under cover of cavalry, already on the march to Villiers.

Towards two o'clock a new attack is made by Maussion's Division upon Villiers, and by Berthaut's Division upon the quarries; the Saxons and Württembergers repulse the enemy.

After crossing the river, Bellemare's Division turns, not upon Noisy, but upon Bry. The Saxons, whose rear had been threatened since 3 o'clock, now evacuate their flanking position at the edge of the heights Bry—Villiers, but not without a vigorous conflict with the French, who again occupy the heights; supported by counter-attacks from Villiers and Noisy, the Saxons retire as far as the churchyard north of Villiers. The right wing of the Germans being threatened by an attack of the IIIrd French Corps, it was considered necessary to call up the Saxon batteries engaged south of Villiers. To repulse an attempt at breaking through, the Saxon artillery, reinforced by the field-division of the Corps Artillery which had just arrived, occupies at about 4 o'clock the ground between Noisy and Villiers.

After the failure of its attack upon Coeuilly, Faron's Division had evacuated even Champigny; Ducrot had hastened to this part of the battlefield to restore order, when he heard fresh vigorous firing in the direction of Villiers.

Twilight had set in. Bellemare's Division ascends the slopes of Bry to make an attack upon Villiers. Without waiting for the arrival of the rest of the infantry told off to join in the assault, the companies of Zouaves rush forward towards the park, "This body," Ducrot says, "that had already distinguished itself at Malmaison, wished by some brilliant achievement to wipe out every trace of the occurrence at Châtillon." With lowered heads they rush forward; fired upon from walls, trenches and all sorts of cover, they lose in a short time 16 officers and 300 rank and file; still they succeed in recovering the two guns that had been abandoned, and then they stream back; now French infantry appears on the plateau, and the Zouaves turn round to renew the conflict. Fortunately for the Germans, their garrison of Villiers had received fresh ammunition from two Saxon columns, when after 4 o'clock Bellemare's Division, supported by four battalions of the IInd Corps, led by Ducrot in person, advanced against the position at Villiers. A hot fire from the Saxon and Württemberg artillery is directed against the assailants and the batteries supporting them—this last effort of the French is no more successful than their earlier ones had been. Their repeated attempts to take Villiers by storm are met by a destructive fire, and they are forced to fall back upon Bry, with a loss of many officers and 600 rank and file. Some of the enemy's infantry also, which advances about 4 o'clock along the railway embankment, is first arrested by case-shot and then driven back; the French, much shaken by artillery fire, are attacked, with loud hurrahs, by the Saxon and Württemberg companies here engaged, and hurled down from the edge of the plateau north of the railway, so that they have to retreat to Le Plant. During the progress of these events on the German right wing and in the centre, their left wing witnessed only an artillery contest, and towards the end of the struggle General von Obernitz brought up a reinforcement of three battalions.

At half-past five the artillery fire along the whole line ceased and the troops on both sides placed outposts and took up their positions for the night. The German outposts extended from the Marne below Noisy, past the height 100, to the Jägerhaus and the Marne; the French outposts stood from Neuilly, past Bry as far as Champigny. The losses suffered were great; those of the Germans amounted to 66 officers and 1627 rank and file; those of the French exceeded 4000.

The French Division of Susbille had succeeded, though suffering severely, in keeping the two other Württemberg brigades engaged in a protracted and obstinate contest south-east of Créteil till one o'clock, and had thus prevented them from



GENERAL V. OBERNITZ.

sending any material support to the brigade engaged with Ducrot at Villiers. The 7th Prussian Brigade also took part in that struggle, and in conjunction with the Württembergers, they recovered the positions which had been abandoned by the German outposts at the commencement of the fight. In the north of Paris a feint was executed by the French against the IVth Prussian Army Corps, which occupied Epinay, north-west of St. Denis. The French succeeded in entering the village by surprise and driving out the Prussian infantry. After a severe struggle, carried on even in the village itself, the French had to abandon it again. An attack upon Stains, which was occupied by the first Division of the Guards, failed.

Chuquet reports that Paris felt herself to be victorious, and Trochu assured the people that one other such day would deliver France. But Ducrot's Army was short of ammunition, a part of his artillery had lost their horses, 4000 men lay dead or wounded on the field; the nights of the 1st and 2nd of December were icy cold, the officers were without baggage, the soldiers without tents, coverlets, and mostly without warm food. Bivouac fires were lighted only beyond the Marne and in its valley; nearer to the German outposts they did not venture to light them; accordingly the French sufferings were indescribable.



SAXON ARMY-SERVICE CORPS.

The 1st of December passed without any contest. An armistice of several hours' duration was made use of to bury the dead and remove the wounded, and both sides worked at the intrenchments of their several positions. The German Commanders made extensive arrangements to reinforce the troops on the battlefield; in the course of the day the reinforcements reached the country immediately south of Ormesson, and a regiment of the 7th Brigade arrived at Coeuilly. All the troops between the Seine and the Marne were put under the command of General von Fransecky, and he was subordinated to the Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Maas; the latter made arrangements to attack Bry and Champigny on the 2nd of December, and to attempt destroying the bridges over the Marne.

The 2nd of December.

The contests of the 2nd of December resembled in every essential point those of the 30th of November. Both days witnessed exasperated struggles in villages, obstinate, passionate and bloody collisions, an infantry fire of the defenders overwhelming every attempted assault; decisive action of the artillery, with regard to which arm the superiority of the Germans, due to their better material and more perfect training, was apparent.

Early on the 2nd of December there were posted at Noisy-le-Grand, the 24th Division of the Saxons, 4 battalions of the 23rd Division, and the Corps Artillery. The Württemberg Brigade occupied Villiers and the Jägerhaus, and the 7th Prussian Brigade had arrived at Jägerhof. The 3rd Division with the Corps Artillery of the IInd Army Corps were still south of Chennevières, part were marching in a northward direction. On the French side the Ist and IInd Corps occupied the positions

they had held on the evening of the 30th of November; three brigades of the IIIrd Corps were behind the Marne, near Bry, and the fourth occupied Bry itself; Susbille's Division of the IInd Corps stood at Créteil.

At 7 o'clock in the morning the Württembergers make a surprise entry into Champigny; they make numerous prisoners; and a movement resembling a flight of a part of the French to Joinville, spreads consternation and disorder. General Ducrot, meaning to visit the outposts, encounters this fugitive mass of vehicles, infantry and cavalry; with the utmost effort and resolution he succeeds, aided by his officers, in restoring some order among this multitude. He orders Susbille's and Bellemare's Divisions immediately to move on to the left bank. The state of things inside Champigny, due to the surprise, is indescribable; fleeing soldiers of all arms in confusion; in their midst a train of waggons bringing provisions increases the disorder; Brigade-General de la Mariouse hastily collects two companies, and leads them with levelled bayonets to oppose the fugitives. At last the troops of Faron's Division succeed, at a strong position in Champigny, in successfully opposing the enemy, and even when Prussian battalions of the 7th Infantry Brigade join in the contest no progress is made either in the village or against the gravel-pits to the north.

With similar success at first, Württemberg companies advance up to the neighbourhood of the Bois-de-la-Lande, but are then driven back along the railway with heavy loss by greatly superior forces. The French infantry pursuing them is taken in the flank by the Colberg Regiment coming from Coeuilly; after a hot fire from the Grenadiers, they are driven with bayonet and butt-end out of a small wood situated east of the Bois-de-la-Lande, and are themselves compelled to retreat to this last-named wood. Here too the struggle is arrested; the conquerors find greatly superior masses in front of them. Württemberg and Prussian guns from Coeuilly keep the enemy under a heavy fire, thus supporting the German infantry that had advanced. Facing them, the French deploy a large number of batteries; "a fierce duel ensues," reports Ducrot, "at sunrise the fire of the Germans becomes extraordinarily accurate."

The three battalions of Saxons told off to take Bry by surprise, reach the enemy's position from Noisy without firing a shot. Here too the troops of Mattat's Division are completely taken by surprise and lose a great number of prisoners; here also an obstinate fight ensues "from house to house, from barricade to barricade, from garden to garden." Part of Maussion's Division, posted in a camp east of Bry, are defeated, and the slopes towards Le Plant are taken possession of by the Saxons. General Ducrot, informed of this surprise, and advised by General d'Exéa, had, considering the state of things in Champigny, ordered the evacuation of Bry, when the arrival there of the forces of General Trochu in the nick of time, induced him to cancel the order. General Mattat led forward fresh forces to the battle round Bry; the French field-batteries on the right bank of the Marne, Mont Avron and Fort Nogent overwhelm Bry and the ground near it with a hail of shot. Beyond the Marne, 30 battalions of the National Guards have taken up a position to protect the bridges at Bry and Neuilly; the Saxons, heroically maintaining their ground under the heavy fire, suffer heavy losses, and Prince George of Saxony being asked for support, sends two battalions of their 24th Division to their assistance.

The German troops engaged at Bry and Champigny being unable to break the resistance of the enemy, General von Fransecky resolves to call up the 3rd Division

and the Corps Artillery of the IInd Corps. Shortly after 10 o'clock this reinforcement appears; five Prussian batteries, followed subsequently by four more, forthwith took up a position at the Jägerhof and the Jägerhaus, two battalions of the 6th Brigade went to the assistance of the combatants about Champigny; the remainder of the brigade halted north-east of the Jägerhof, where they suffered no inconsiderable losses from the enemy's artillery-fire, spite of the cover afforded by the ground. Towards 11 o'clock the 5th Brigade arrived at Coeuilly.

At last the gravel-pits north of Champigny are wrested from the French, and the Germans succeed in retaining them; whilst an attack made by General von Hartmann with the troops assembled at Champigny, advances victoriously as far the road of Villiers. The French defend themselves with great resolution.



GENERAL V. FRANSECKY.

The fire of the fourteen batteries placed east of Champigny perceptibly weakened the fire of the enemy; on the other hand, the Prussian batteries suffered more and more severely under the fire of the heavy artillery of the French forts. Accordingly they were withdrawn at about one o'clock, and placed north-east of the Jägerhof, in the valley extending towards Villiers.

According to Ducrot's statements the Divisions of Bellemare and Susbielle, which were called up to reinforce the most threatened points, crossed the Marne at Joinville. Susbielle's Division entered the fighting-line north of Champigny, where their artillery very soon suffered heavy losses at the hands of the Prussian batteries east of Champigny;

Bellemare's Division marched upon Bry, to relieve the brigade of Mattat's Division, which was quite exhausted. After the withdrawal of the artillery on the left wing of the Germans, their battle-line near Champigny, on the road to Villiers, was reinforced by a regiment of infantry. Neither side made any further attacks on a large scale; only a hot but indecisive musketry-fire continued till darkness set in. The Württembergers, who had been fighting since the morning, went to Coeuilly; the infantry of the IInd Army Corps held the line extending from the wood east of the Bois-de-la-Lande, as far as the Marne, south of Champigny; the 2nd Württemberg Brigade had arrived in the afternoon at Chennevières.

Let us now turn to the events brought about by the two battalions of the 24th Division¹ being sent to the right wing of the Germans near Bry.

¹ To judge from the German official account of the war, and from what is said below, p. 305, these two battalions were the 3rd battalion 107th Regiment and the 1st battalion 108th [Rifle] Regiment. The latter belonged to the 23rd Division, not the 24th. It appears from what General von Holleben says below, that another battalion of the 108th followed almost at once. [*Trs.*]

General Ducrot had determined to seize upon Villiers. Towards 10 o'clock the infantry of Maussion's and Mattat's Divisions ascended the slopes of Bry, in the direction of the heights 100 and 109. The battalion of the Regiment of Rifles, advancing from Villiers towards Bry, encountered these hostile masses on their advance. Resolutely attacking the enemy, who partly appeared at their flank, the Saxons succeed in gaining the height 109; a second battalion of the Regiment of Rifles enters the combat; two companies of the other battalion sent forward as a reinforcement to Bry, belonging to the 107th Regiment, prolong the right wing, whilst the two other companies, adhering to their original destination, move upon Bry. Supported by some Württembergers from the garrison of Villiers, the fight is brought to a stand, but the Germans being greatly inferior in numbers, suffer heavy losses. Towards noon they succeed indeed in reaching the hotly disputed edge of the heights, "but here," in the words of the Saxon report, "the impetus, the power of the attack was broken." The French, strengthened by a reinforcement, compel the German troops, although the third battalion of their Regiment of Rifles also enters the engagement, to retreat to Villiers. The French pursue, and "having made good their footing within a short distance of the walls of the park of Villiers," says Ducrot, "the ammunition runs short. The General sends men of his escort to fetch cartridges from the ammunition-carts at Bry. The bags of cartridges, fastened to the saddles, are quickly brought up, and the intrepid horsemen distribute them among the skirmishers"; the fire of the infantry and of the artillery south of Villiers puts an end to the pursuit, but under these changed circumstances Bry has to be evacuated by the Saxons, and some brave men who had advanced too far in the place were made prisoners.

Reinforced by portions of Susbille's Division, the French, with the coöperation of a strong artillery force, make a fresh attack upon Villiers. Batteries of the IInd Prussian Army Corps quit their cover west of Coeuilly, and advance at a gallop against the right flank of the enemy's artillery. Their fire compels the French artillery to withdraw, and the Prussians return to their cover. On this day also the fierce and bloody contests on the battlefield Villiers—Champigny are terminated only at nightfall. The Germans lost 156 officers and 3373 rank and file killed and wounded; the French lost altogether on both the days of battle, 424 officers and 9053 rank and file. The lists of losses suffered by the Württembergers, Saxons and Prussians on the 2nd of December are tablets of honour that will testify to later generations the death-defying courage, the devotion and discipline of the German warriors!

Gambetta had sent word that in the first days of December the Army of the Loire would bivouack in the forest of Fontainebleau, only six (German) miles (=abt. 27 Engl. miles) south-east of Paris. Hoping from hour to hour for the appearance of this Army of Relief, the French remained the whole of the 3rd of December on the left bank of the Marne; the day passed by amidst small contests; on the morning of the 4th they had evacuated their positions and were retreating to Paris.

"Je ne rentrerai dans Paris que mort ou victorieux; vous pourrez me voir tomber, mais vous ne me verrez par reculer,"¹ these were the concluding words of Ducrot's

¹ "I shall not re-enter Paris unless either dead or conqueror; you may see me fall, but you will not see me yield."

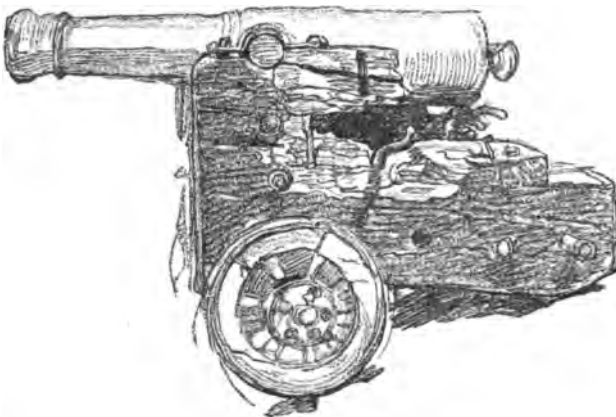
order of the day, previous to the battles on the Marne; he returned to Paris neither dead nor victor, but his opponents must acknowledge in justice to the General, who was wounded, though not killed, that he did not fear death, that he braved every danger at the critical moments and places of the battle, and that it was impossible for him to gain the victory over the German troops, which were better knit together, better trained and better led.

After these contests on the Marne, and the feints, which taxed and exhausted the German troops no less than the French, deep silence and repose set in, especially along the whole line of the Army of the Maas. Winter had clad the earth with a thick coat of snow, and not a shot fell, not even at the outposts. From time to time we had to test the bearing power of the ice on the flooded grounds in front of us, as other measures would have to be taken should the French be able to cross the ice. The French posted at St. Denis seemed to be in a merry mood; they shot at crows and pelted each other with snow-balls.

The weight of the fire of the heavy batteries at Mont Avron, whose voice we heard even now several times a day; had proved so galling during the battles on the Marne, that it became indispensably necessary to take the employment of siege-artillery into serious consideration, and the more so, because the position remained threatening even after the failure of the attempts on a large scale to break through. On the 4th of December the Commander-in-Chief ordered the Commander of the Army of the Maas to drive out the French from Mont Avron by using siege-artillery. After the fall of the fortress of La Fère on the 27th of November, 26 heavy guns were set free to be brought up; there were also fetched 40 more guns from the Prussian fortresses and 10 new guns made in our workshops at home; these were combined into a park of artillery at Brou, about $4\frac{1}{2}$ Eng. miles to the east, on the road to Lagny.

Towards the middle of the month a thaw set in; after foggy weather and a gloomy sky, a northern light was once more seen on the 17th of December. On the 18th of December the artillery of the IVth Army Corps fired upon two gun-boats, which sailed slowly up and down the Seine near St. Denis and shelled the IVth Army Corps. This cannonade, dubbed by our men the "sea-fight of Epinay," soon

came to an end. French deserters, ever increasing in numbers, uniformly told us that they were badly fed, even bread was only distributed in small rations, and only wine was plentiful. Towards the 20th of December indications of an intended sally on a large scale against the Corps of Guards and the XIIth Army Corps increased in number; this sally was inferred partly from the great number of batteries placed between Bondy and Courneuve, and partly from the



(After a contemporary sketch by G. Bleibtreu.)

statements of deserters and of the French papers. ¹ During the afternoon of the 20th it was noticed from our posts of observation, that columns of troops of all arms were moving in an easterly direction towards Aubervilliers and Courneuve, and in the night before the 21st the outposts reported much noise and electric light in St. Denis. The Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Maas took the measures necessary to meet a sally, and as the 2nd Division of the Guards seemed to be threatened most, troops from the 1st Division of the Guards and of the Saxons were placed on its two flanks, ready to support it.

Paris still eagerly hoping for the appearance of the Army of the Loire, a new plan of bursting through the lines of the enemy was matured immediately after the battles on the Marne. General Ducrot thought that in the north of Paris, between Bondy and Le Bourget, he could fight under more favourable circumstances, that he would be better able to bring into play the traditional qualities of the French infantry, and that as the German artillery would not find there any more elevated positions his own would be able to cope with it. The French worked with great ardour at the rehabilitation of their Second Army, and in consequence of the great losses it had sustained they only formed two Corps and a Division of Reserves. In the midst of all this bustle there arrived in Paris a letter of Moltke's, informing them of the defeat of the Army of the Loire and the re-occupation of Orleans by the Germans. This letter was the cause of the liveliest discussions among the governing powers of Paris. An opportunity was thereby offered to the French to open negotiations with the Germans, and several members of the Government expressed their approval of this course being taken, hoping for better terms, but they did not prevail. Trochu acknowledged the receipt of the letter, had it placarded in the streets, adding thereto that duty required the continuance of the struggle. Ducrot, who had advised entering into negotiations, speaks with some bitterness of the long, painful and superfluous discussions at the Cabinet meetings, having no definite object or high standpoint, but characterized by dread of the public opinion and of the excitement of the populace of Paris. He was of opinion that the Capital had done enough for duty and honour, and that it would be better to negotiate now than to wait till one was compelled to surrender at discretion. "Peace, then," says he, "would have saved us the horrors and brutalities of the Commune, which for a time made us outlaws in Europe and lost us for all time the benefit of our painful sacrifices and glorious efforts."

Spite of their knowledge of the defeat of the Army of the Loire, the French adhered to the plan of breaking through at Le Bourget, in order to join the northern army of Faidherbe, which could not be far off. On the 20th of December the French troops took up a position to the north-east of Paris.

BATTLE OF LE BOURGET ON THE 21ST OF DECEMBER.

According to the dispositions of General Trochu, the troops stationed in St. Denis were to conquer Le Bourget, and after this achievement the Second Army was to advance to the attack, breaking forth from the line Bondy—Aubervilliers, in the direction of Le Blanc-Ménail—Aulnay; those movements were to be supported by

¹ The garrulity of the Paris journals has repeatedly done great harm to the French cause. [*Trs.*]

feints in the west and south-east; reserves were posted at no great distance from the Second Army, and numerous gun-pits had been constructed. The troops carried provisions for six days and oats for four days, and took with them only tents, blankets, cartridges, provisions and the needful utensils for forming a camp; shoes and changes of linen were packed in bales and carried in the rear by the weakly men.

On the morning of the 21st a dense fog hung over Paris and her environs, and not till a quarter to eight had the fog lifted sufficiently to enable the troops told off to storm Le Bourget to start on their march. The signal to open fire was given by iron-clad railway-trucks carrying artillery, which travelled along the line from Cour-neuve to Le Bourget. There ensued from all the intrenchments and batteries a hot, but short, bombardment of the German positions, especially of the village Le Bourget and its communications to the rear. The French advanced in two great columns; one against the eastern and northern sides, the other towards the southern part of the village.

The defenders of Le Bourget, a battalion of the Regiment Elizabeth and a company of rifles of the Guards were prepared for the assault; they occupied the defensive positions and repulsed repeated attacks against the south side of the village, even though the enemy was supported by a third column. On the other hand, some marines belonging to the column approaching from the west, being still favoured by the fog, succeed in entering the village from the north. Amidst a fierce fire they advance towards the south, and there the Prussians holding the churchyard, being attacked in front and rear, are forced to surrender. Spite of the most obstinate defence of the Germans, the French at about half-past eight are masters of the western half of the village, excepting a few houses which were especially suited for defence. The attempt to make a breach in the walls of the gas-works at the southern end of the village, by means of the guns from the iron-clad railway-trucks, was indeed successful; but the brave defenders of the place did not budge.

In consequence of the unfavourable direction of the wind, and of the circumstance that the messenger sent by the officer in command in Le Bourget was captured by the French, who had entered from the north, the reinforcements of Prussian troops arrived very late. A patrol which had gone forward from Pont-Iblon, returned, every man of them being wounded, and brought the news of the events at Le Bourget to the knowledge of Colonel Count von Kanitz, the Commander of the 3rd Brigade of Infantry of the Guards; immediately he hurried forward (it was about 9 o'clock) a company of the Regiment Alexander, and next a battalion of the Regiment Franz to the assistance of the garrison, and followed these up later on by two companies of rifles of the Guards.

At ten o'clock the energy of the French already began to flag; "our assaults," Ducrot says, "were met by resistance that could not be overcome; fired upon at close range from all sides out of every house on the other side of the street, and overwhelmed with a hail of Prussian and French shells coming from every quarter, neither soldiers nor marines are able to advance a step." After a long fight lasting till noon, and which cost us dear, we succeeded in gradually wresting from the French those parts of the village which they had conquered. This day, specially honourable for the brave garrison of Le Bourget, also furnished the artillery of the Guards with an opportunity to distinguish themselves. General Ducrot, without taking part in

the struggle at Le Bourget, had been waiting impatiently for the capture of the place, his orders being to advance with the Second Army only after the place had been taken. When he saw that Le Bourget was being obstinately defended, he ordered, as preparation for his enterprise, about 90 guns to take up a position in front of Drancy. Against these there were first opposed three batteries of the Guards stationed at Le Blanc-Ménnil; these, towards noon, were reinforced by two more batteries. During this lively artillery-duel four batteries of the Corps Artillery made their appearance at Pont-Iblon. Colonel von Helden first led two batteries into a position north-east of Le Bourget, and then with the mounted batteries galloped across the inundated ground; a truly splendid military spectacle for all those who witnessed it, either as combatants or spectators. In a successful contest lasting several hours the batteries of the Guards maintain their position till four o'clock in the afternoon.

General Ducrot had not yet crossed the brook Molette with his infantry, when soon after midday he received orders to suspend his movements, seeing that the attack upon Le Bourget had failed. The Army returned to its bivouacs.

The Corps of the Guards had lost 9 officers, 436 rank and file; the French 31 officers and 952 rank and file. Also in front of the 1st Division of the Guards at Stains considerable forces coming from St. Denis had deployed early in the morning; they repeatedly attacked Stains, but were repulsed, leaving on the field a number of killed and wounded, who were afterwards fetched away in many carts.

Whilst the French also made demonstrations before the IVth and Vth Army Corps, a feint on a large scale was made by General Vinoy in the valley of the Marne, which cost the French 600 men and had no important effect whatever on the defence.

The presence next day of considerable French forces in the neighbourhood of Drancy, the marching to and fro of columns, and the active railway traffic audible from the direction of St. Denis led us as late as the 23rd to expect a continuation of the contest for the possession of Le Bourget, and accordingly the troops of the Army of the Maas were held in readiness during the succeeding days.

THE BOMBARDMENT.

Christmas! The weather on the 24th of December was clear, but cold and windy; the French in front of our outposts were amusing themselves with skating on the ice of the hard-frozen, inundated ground. Along the whole line of investment Christmas Eve was celebrated in the good old German fashion; here in a handsome villa, with good wine and well-covered table; there behind earthworks, with simpler viands; some before a bright fire in a warm room, others on posts exposed to gusts of cold winds. Amidst all these various circumstances they had one feature in common, the thought of their loved ones at home assembled round the Christmas table, the silent greetings and fervent prayers which sped from thousands of hearts to the fatherland, or found their way to the Heavenly Father.

At St. Brice, the Head-Quarters of the 1st Division of the Guards, Divine Service was celebrated at 7 o'clock in the evening in the church, which was adorned with a large Christmas tree; a sacred solemn hour, while gazing at the tree by the altar, we drew renewed vigour to meet the days and the fate in store for us; behind the tree we beheld the dawn of the new year, destined with Easter Bells to ring in, as was fondly hoped, Peace for the fatherland!

The cleavage among the members of the Paris government, which shewed itself after the 2nd of December, became more and more pronounced after the battle of Le Bourget. To satisfy the so-called public opinion, the necessity of appointing a council of war to control Trochu's action was discussed, and the bad impression made by the non-success at Le Bourget was pressed home. "We had hoped," said Jules Favre, "for a decisive battle, and all we got was a skirmish;" Trochu's offer to resign was taken into consideration. Attacks on Le Bourget from the open field had proved hopeless; it was determined to advance by approaches, and the work was begun immediately. But the French soldiers suffered keenly, working in the severe cold, and on the 26th all further attacks on Le Bourget were abandoned. "And whilst the soldiers on the plain of St. Denis were discharging their arduous duties," writes Ducrot, "there was raised in the clubs and in the papers the cry of treason."

During the month of December the Germans made arrangements for constructing entrenched batteries against Mont Avron. Protected by the outposts, that had in some points been pushed forward, they succeeded, in spite of the great cold and the hard frost of the ground, in getting the siege-batteries ready by the 26th of December, and opening fire on the 27th from 76 guns against Mont Avron and the neighbouring forts. But the French had also considerably strengthened their position on Mont Avron; its armament had been raised to 74 guns, shelters were perfected and the fortified camp was occupied by Hugue's Division; but in view of the threatening activity of the enemy most of Hugue's men were, during the night of the 27th, withdrawn to the south-west slopes.

On the morning of the 27th, at half-past eight, the German batteries opened fire amidst a fall of snow. Mont Avron and the neighbouring forts immediately replied; but it soon became evident that, spite of the total number of the French guns being superior to that of the Germans, Mont Avron would not be able to hold out long against the concentric shell fire directed against it. In the afternoon its fire already grew weaker, in the evening and during the nights shots fell few and far between, whilst the Germans, at good long intervals, continued their bombardment also during the night. On the 28th Mont Avron hardly replied at all, and only the forts returned the fire of the German batteries. Although only a part of their guns were *hors de combat* and the losses of the French did not exceed 160 killed and wounded, yet the moral effect of the bombardment was so great that the evacuation of Mont Avron was ordered on the 28th, and carried out in the succeeding night. This rapid success enabled us to direct our fire as early as the 28th against the railway-stations of Noisy-le-Sec and Bondy and the garrisons of these places, so that the railway traffic of the French had to be suspended and the heavy batteries at Bondy had to be moved to the rear. A most beneficent result of the work of our siege-artillery was the calm and security now enjoyed by the investing troops; as the French guns now directed their fire exclusively against our siege-artillery, the galling annoyance to our troops, which had hitherto been going on day and night, came to an end. Spite of the very considerable number of guns opposed to us, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Maas was able, after the victory over Mont Avron, to carry out his plan of gradually extending the front of our artillery-attack. Meanwhile the transport of ammunition for the attack from the south was so well advanced that that bombardment could also immediately be set about.

On the 5th of January, at 8 o'clock in the morning, the cannons on the plateau of Châtillon opened fire and the other batteries immediately joined in. The French replied at once, and directed their fire mainly against the batteries at Châtillon with such energy as to cause us grievous loss there. In the afternoon of the 1st day the German guns, thanks to their better quality, had established their superiority; Fort Issy ceased firing at 2 o'clock, the fire of Vanves visibly grew feebler and feebler, and only Mont Rouge stood firm the whole day. On the right wing also we soon succeeded in silencing the French artillery at Les Hautes-Bruyères. During the subsequent days the Germans continued their fire with more or less energy, according as the state of the weather enabled them to take observations. The battery in the park of St. Cloud had a difficult position, being fired upon in front from the walls of the city, and in the left flank from Mont Valérien.

Letters from home told long tales how people wondered at the delay in bombarding Paris with heavy artillery, and the troops in the lines of investment also





PICQUET AT ST. CLOUD.

eagerly listened to hear from the south the voice of the heavy artillery. "You are more impatient for the fall of Paris than we are," Von S. . . . writes home from Versailles, "which is very natural, as we are witnesses of the difficulties presented day by day, and are fully occupied with the various

incidents. This fog is malicious to a degree, and only rarely, about noon, we can take a tolerably good aim. The more interruptions there are, the more time the French have for repairs, and we have to begin again *da capo*. Still, fog or no fog, the hunger in the city is on the increase. It is very funny; the French have protested against the bombardment of Paris; those

fellows have not yet dropt their presumption. They positively believed we would not dare to insult them with our fire."

In fact at home the eyes of all were directed upon Paris, the whole nation was fully and gratefully conscious that, after the heavy sacrifices they had made, they had at last effected the complete overthrow of their arrogant enemy. This sentiment found expression in the well-known picture by Count Harrach, of Moltke at a post of observation, which found a large circulation and delighted acceptance in every part of the country. In the person of its Field-Marshal, with his musing gaze, the German people loves to see itself personified, and is deeply moved when, "by God's gracious providence," it looks down through his eyes on the Capital of the hereditary foe. General von Claer, who had been the Field-Marshal's Aide-de-camp for many years, writes: "The history of this picture is peculiar. Taking a ride in the neighbourhood of Versailles, we discovered at Bellevue, a place on the high ground between Sèvres and Meudon, a small villa which, like the rest of the place, had been abandoned by its inhabitants. From the attic-window it commanded a fine view upon Paris and upon some of the siege-batteries. This was a favourite spot of Moltke's, and he generally went there after his second breakfast, which he used to partake of at 12 o'clock. As

a rule both Burt and myself accompanied him, but sometimes only one of us. He then was quite absorbed by the magnificent spectacle of the bombardment and the reply of the enemy. Great silence was then observed in that attic.¹ At times the Field-Marshal, who had an excellent field-glass, drew our attention to one point or another, or we made bold to mention some observation of our own, and these were then discussed in a few words. I can't, however, assert that these observations afforded any reliable information about the effect of the fire. This was partly owing to the smoke of the powder, and partly to the great distances.

Sometimes we thus learnt the events of the day in the batteries, our losses and our established successes, in the evening, but most commonly not till the following morning, through the report made out by General von Hindersin. Accordingly our observations had no direct influence upon the orders of the Field-Marshal. Nevertheless he felt attracted to this outlook, and sat spell-bound before this oval-shaped 'oeil de boeuf.' We Aides-de-camp were delighted with these and similar excursions that occurred almost daily at the same time, for they



Capt. v. Burt.

Lieut.-Col. von Claer.

(After a painting by Graf Harrach.)

(By permission of Mr. Alexander Duncker, of Berlin.)

were evidently a bodily and mental recreation and refreshment for our Chief, who had to bear such heavy responsibilities. Sometimes he also visited the outposts, where we endeavoured with the greatest caution, so as not to attract the attention of the enemy, to creep up as near as possible to the most advanced posts. He was

¹ Moltke's taciturnity, like that of William the Silent, has become proverbial. It was said of him, that he could be silent in seven languages. [*Trs.*]

anxious to see with his own eyes. It may readily be believed that our visits were not always very welcome, for the least unusual commotion observed by the enemy brought upon us their sugar-loaf¹ greetings. When we visited the villa too, we had always to leave the carriage behind in Sèvres, and taking the road to the castle of Meudon, walk along at the back of the houses of Bellevue, because the broad and straight street was commanded by Mont Valérien. So it happened one day that, when Moltke and his escort had left the villa and, instead of seeking cover, were walking along in the middle of the road, they were at once greeted by one of the gigantic shots from Valérien, which burst about 15 paces in front of them and covered them



BASTION No. 2 IN THE FORT OF VANVES.
(From a contemporary photograph.)

all over with mud. The Field-Marshal, delighted with this exciting experience, picked up and preserved a splinter of the shell. The original of this picture was made by Count Harrach, who was himself in the villa with the Field-Marshal. He has faithfully rendered the situation in the attic, and the attic itself down to the minutest detail, even the defective back of the chair. I know of no other picture of the Field-Marshal so eloquent and so characteristically like him."

After the suppression of the fort our fire was mainly directed against the outside batteries and the walls of the city, and owing to their great distance, a forward movement of our artillery became necessary. The bombardment of the city was

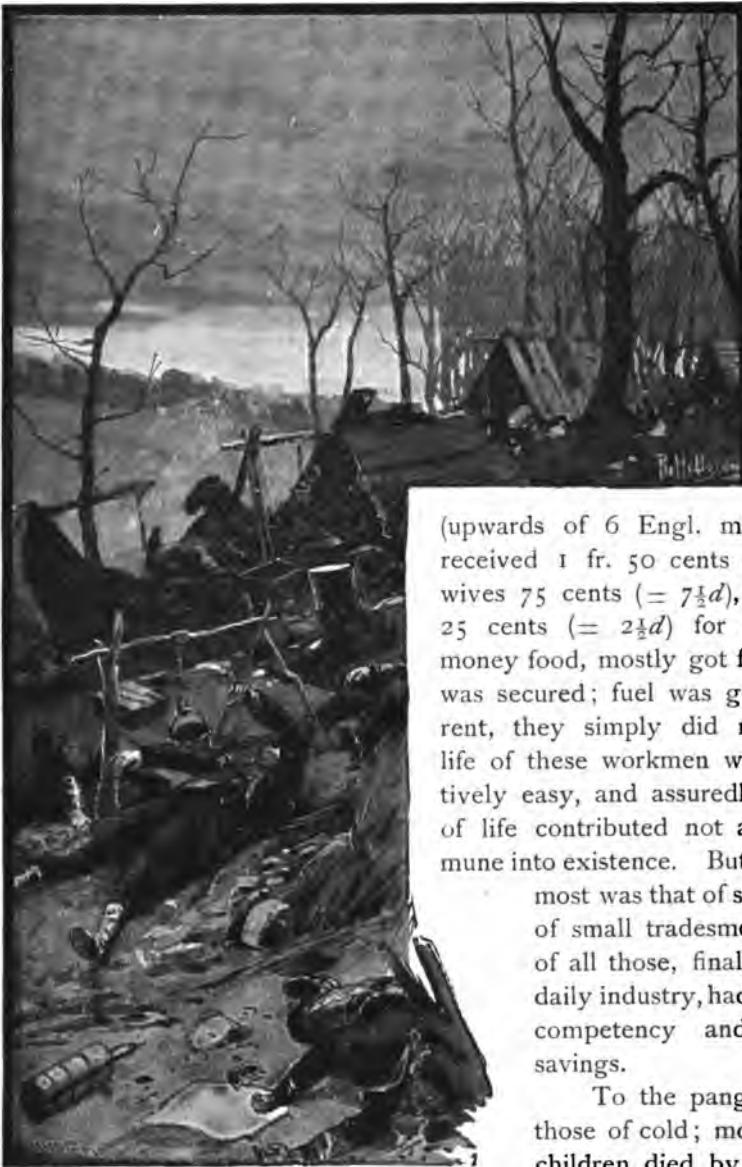
¹ Conically shaped shells. [*Trs.*]

begun by two batteries of heavy guns being told off to fire 40 to 50 incendiary shells a day per gun against the nearest quarters of the city. On the 14th of January the foremost batteries had approached nearer by about 1000 paces; it was now a question of assuming a waiting attitude and utilizing the successes attained till the attack in the north should have proved equally successful.

After the severe but also glorious combats of the 1st Corps of the Bavarians on the Loire, this Corps stood from the 24th of December as a general reserve in a position south of Paris. A Southern Army having to be formed against Bourbaki, the IInd Army Corps was incorporated with it, and accordingly the 1st Bavarian Corps entered the line of investment on the right bank of the Seine between the VIth Corps and the Württembergers. Towards the middle of the month of January the French exhibited an increased amount of activity. On the 10th they fell upon the Bavarian posts in the entrenchment at Clamart; on the 13th they tried for the third time to take Le Bourget, but their repeated assaults were repulsed; on the 14th several battalions of National Guards assembled with much noise at the station north of Clamart, and advanced together with some marines against the works of the Germans at Clamart; being received by the Bavarians with a hot fire and then fiercely attacked, they fled back to Paris. The French alarmed also the troops of the Army of the Maas, north of Paris; nay, they even made a fourth attempt at Le Bourget, and although all these enterprises, mostly made at night, proved of no advantage to the French, they yet caused much annoyance and disturbance to the Germans, who often had to be kept in readiness for hours, so as to be able to make a timely opposition to any serious attempts of the enemy.

In Paris circumstances assumed day by day a more and more sombre face, and the temper of the populace became increasingly threatening. The wildest reports were spread and believed—"the Bay of the Jahde¹ was seized by the French fleet"—"the Army of the Loire was advancing victoriously, and jointly with Bourbaki's Army they were now within a few kilometers of Fontainebleau"—"all the Poles in the Prussian Army had mutinied and were declaring for France." In the midst of the exulting joy caused by these news so greedily believed, there suddenly arrived reports of great disasters, which were true and could not be concealed, and yet within a few hours messages like the following would arrive: "Great excitement in Berlin over the results of the battles of the 30th of November and 3rd of December, when cries were raised: 'Down with William!' In Vienna the people were crying. 'Hurrah for the French Republic!' and demanding an alliance with France against Prussia." This daily seesaw between hope and fear led more readily to blank despair than the bitterest truth. And to these moral sorrows were added the pangs of physical distress! "The rich," reports Ducrot, "could still manage to exist; paying very high prices, life was still endurable; as for the poor, they found in the soup-kitchens and similar charitable institutions food ready prepared; public charity endeavoured to double its contributions; tickets for bread, meat, firewood, coals and rice were lavishly distributed. Accordingly these unhappy people were comparatively the least wretched of all the besieged. The working classes too had nothing to complain of; the measures of defence gave employment to all trades in iron, steel, lead, wood, leather, cloth etc, and this

¹ The Jahdebucht is a bay in the German Ocean, near Bremen. [*Trs.*]



A FORSAKEN FRENCH CAMP.

required so many thousand hands that the demand for labourers exceeded the supply, and every workman who preferred work to idleness found employment. Those who considered it more patriotic to loaf about on the walls with a gun on their shoulders, being at a distance of 10 kilometers

(upwards of 6 Engl. miles) from the Prussians received 1 fr. 50 cents (= 1s 3d) a day; their wives 75 cents (= 7½d), and in some battalions 25 cents (= 2½d) for every child. With this money food, mostly got from the public charities, was secured; fuel was got by tickets, and as for rent, they simply did not pay it at all. The life of these workmen was accordingly comparatively easy, and assuredly the ease of this mode of life contributed not a little to call the Commune into existence. But the class which suffered most was that of small capitalists, of clerks, of small tradesmen and shopkeepers and of all those, finally, who, thanks to their daily industry, had been enjoying a modest competency and slowly accumulating savings.

To the pangs of hunger were added those of cold; mortality rose enormously; children died by thousands."

Chuquet reports that the failure of the battle of Le Bourget, the evacuation of Mont Avron, the cruel cold, the

privations and the bombardment of the town had irritated the Parisian populace beyond measure, and that it had demanded a sally, "resembling a tearing torrent," in which the National Guard should take part, cost what it might. All confidence in Trochu was gone, the other members of the government looked at him askance, and Jules Favre was intending to remove him and give his post to Ducrot, or Vinoy, or Bellemare. A great sally of the Army and the National Guards had finally been determined upon, but Trochu had characterized it as an act of despair, and then proposed to

make the sally in the direction of the plateau of Châtillon; a plan impossible of execution as the French troops could not have crossed the space between Paris and Châtillon without being totally destroyed.

Finally the proposal was accepted to make, covered by Mont Valérien, a great sally with 90,000 men and 30 batteries in the direction of the heights of Garches; 42,000 National Guards were to be brigaded with Regiments of the Line in such a manner that every brigade should have a regiment of National Guards. "When 10,000 men of the National Guards lie prostrate on the ground," said a member of the government, "public opinion will calm down." But the men who afterwards were leaders of the Commune, were coming more and more to the front, and already they were shouting to the Paris mob: "The policy, administration and conduct of the war of the Government of the 4th of September only continues the traditions of the Empire and is condemned; make room for the people! make room for the Commune!"

Von S. . . . writes from Versailles on the 17th of January: "That the situation in Paris is getting very ticklish is proved by the sallies growing ever feebler, and by a letter from that proud man, Jules Favre, addressed to Bismarck, requesting to be allowed to leave Paris together with his family, cousins etc. Bismarck answered him that he had no power to grant this, and that he was surprised that the man who had demanded 'War to the knife' should prefer such a request."

In the ancient Hall of Audience¹ of Louis XIV in the palace of Versailles the Unity of the German nation under Emperor William was proclaimed on the 18th of January, 1871; the troops of the Corps investing Paris had sent deputations to that celebration; German Standards stood erected in this Salle des Glaces at this Inauguration of our Empire. "The King," wrote Von S. . . ., "was deeply moved; and when we proclaimed him Emperor, not only the French Hall shook, but every fibre in our bodies quivered. When the Crown Prince doing homage, fell at the Emperor's feet, many a tear of emotion was shed. Beautiful and soldierly it was, that when the King had received the homage of the Officers, he went down along the ranks of non-commissioned Officers and Privates and spoke to them. The people of Versailles said on the 18th that we were collecting our standards in the palace, to hand them over in order to Trochu, when our whole Army capitulated. This was said by the people of Versailles, who had watched us round them as victors in every fight; how great must be the delusion of other Frenchmen! It is madness of this sort that sees treason in every defeat."

THE BATTLE OF MONT VALÉRIEN ON JANUARY 19TH, 1871.

Exaggerated, one might almost say fantastic, despatches of Gambetta, concerning the favourable state of things in the provinces and the position of France in the eyes of the other powers, raised fresh hopes and "had," as Ducrot remarks, "baleful effects on the decisions of the Government of Paris. The fruitless and bloody days on the Marne were forgotten; trusting to the deceitful words of these men, they ventured

¹ This hall is better known as the "Salle des Glaces", the Hall of Mirrors. This proclamation of the German Empire in the palace of that very King who had made the main object of his long reign the humiliation and destruction the German Empire, is an act of poetic justice, probably without parallel in history. [*Trs.*]

on the wildest enterprises; such as taking by force the impregnable positions which covered the Head-Quarters at Versailles, with troops that were exhausted and with National Guards without training or discipline."

At a Council of War held on the 16th of January Ducrot and several Generals had expressed their misgivings about a sally upon Garches, without the coöperation from without of an army of relief; their expostulations were not listened to, and the only answer vouchsafed them was: "The People insists on this enterprise." Jules Favre insisting on speedy action, orders for the 19th of January were issued in haste and hurry.

The attack was to be executed in three columns. The column on the left wing, under Vinoy, was instructed to advance from the brick-yards (Briqueterie), south of Mont Valérien, parallel with the line of railway, and take the intrenchment at Montretout; the centre column, under Bellemare, was to advance from Fouilleuse and seize upon the heights of Garches and park of Buzenval; the right column, under Ducrot, starting from east of Rueil, was, secured on the right by a flank guard, to advance upon the castle of Buzenval and St. Cucufa and attempt to reach the horse farm (Haras). To this blow was opposed the Vth Army Corps, whose 17th Brigade of Infantry held the line from the Seine at St. Cloud past the Porte Jaune, Villeneuve and La Bergerie, and whose 20th Brigade of Infantry was posted along the line, castle of Buzenval, La Jonchère and Malmaison as far as the Seine. There were posts of observation in front of the position, and officers' patrols had been sent forward into the country in front. The temper of the population of Paris, their violent craving for some glorious deed of arms, had found full expression in the Paris papers, which were read by the Germans; these, together with the observations made by the Germans themselves and the reports coming in about the doings of the French, pointed to an approaching attack on the Vth Army Corps.

A dense fog prevailed on the morning of the 19th of January, and it was 9 o'clock before the Commander of the Vth Corps at Versailles received reports from the outposts of both the Divisions, leading to the expectation of a French attack along the whole of the position. The Landwehr Division of the Guards and the observation post at La Jonchère announced the approach of columns of all arms from Mont Valérien and Nanterre. Immediately General von Kirchbach ordered that the main reserves of the two Divisions should assemble at Jardy and Beauregard respectively. The Emperor William went to Marly, and the Crown Prince ordered that six battalions of the Landwehr of the Guards and one brigade of the IIInd Bavarian Corps were to move up to Versailles.

According to the instructions added to General Trochu's orders for the 19th of January, the heads of the three French columns were to have reached their several starting-points, the brick-yard, Fouilleuse, and the country east of Reuil by 6 o'clock and be ready for the advance; three cannon-shots from Mont Valérien were to give the signal for the common attack. Detailed instructions as to the roads the several columns were to take to reach their allotted starting-points were not given, and in consequence great and fatal delays occurred as to their times of arrival. Although the signal from Valérien was given as late as 7 o'clock, yet only Beaufort's Division of the left column stood ready for fight; the other Division, that of Courty, was still on the march through Suresnes; the head of the centre column had indeed reached

the neighbourhood of La Foulleuse, but the rest of the column had not got into position; and of Ducrot's column only a few batteries were approaching Nanterre. General Trochu arrived at Mont Valérien after the signal for the beginning of the



Sketch for the battles on 21st October and 19th January.

battle had already been given; though he was informed of the delay in the arrival of Ducrot's troops, he was no longer able to arrest the attack of the left column, which was begun as soon as the signal was given.

Screened by the fog, the French had quickly deployed their infantry and a few

batteries and advanced upon St Cloud. As they approached the intrenchment of Montretout and the combat here began, the French opened a fierce fire from Mont Valérien and the walls of Paris, upon the ground behind the first German line of defence, which the supports hastening up had to cross. The foremost posts of observation of the 9th Division are driven back, but the intrenchment cannot at once be taken. It is held by about 90 men (5th Jägers and 58th Regiment) under Lieutenant von Kauffungen; these make a brave defence and only abandon the place towards 10 o'clock when the ammunition begins to give out; but their retreat being already cut off, though a part of the brave defenders cut their way through, the larger portion, mostly wounded men, are made prisoners by the enemy, who immediately occupies the intrenchment with two battalions. Meanwhile the French have also forced their way into St. Cloud; there, however, the 58th Regiment, informed betimes of the approach of the enemy, occupied their defensive positions in the village and the park and arrested his further advance. By this time the centre French column had also entered the contest, driven away the Prussian outposts from the heights north of Garches, and made good its advance into that place, and into the park of Buzenval from the east. The Prussians receive as a first support the 5th Battalion of Jägers, which in accordance with its instructions endeavours to gain the heights from Montretout to La Bergerie. The Jägers strengthen the defence of St. Cloud, a company of theirs receives the party returning from the intrenchment; jointly with the 58th Regiment they repulse the enemy by rapid firing from the Porte-Jaune, and with parts of the 58th and 59th Regiments they again expel the French from Garches; the heights north of the place, however, being already occupied by great forces of the enemy, cannot be retaken. A company of Jägers is in time to reach La Bergerie and to repulse the attack of the French battalions; the batteries of the outposts take up their position and fire against the heights of Garches; six companies of the 59th Regiment occupy the defensive position from Porte-Verte as far as the paddocks (Haras). In front of La Bergerie the Prussian Jägers and the French of the centre column face each other at close quarters; every attempt to take the farm is defeated by the Prussian fire. The French place dynamite against the wall to make a breach, but as no explosion follows, first an officer tries to fire it with his revolver, then a non-commissioned officer with his gun, but all in vain, the dynamite is frozen. The feeble garrison of La Bergerie is able to maintain its position during the whole day.

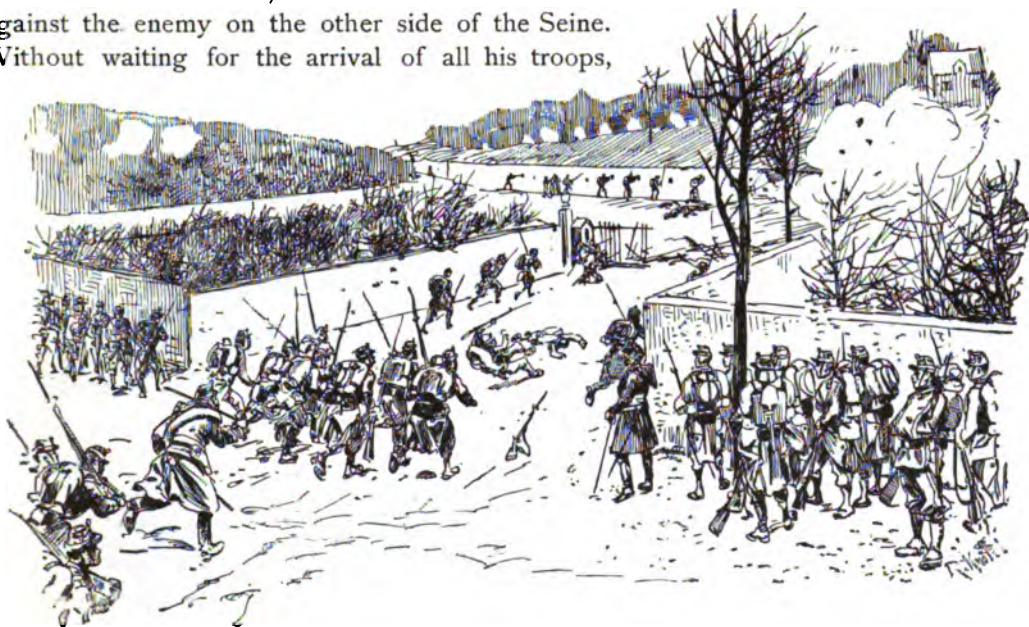
At St. Cloud and Montretout the contest rages furiously, and the railway-station abandoned at the beginning of the fight is retaken. The Germans, although reinforced by the Fusilier Battalions of the Brigade, are unable to expel the French from the houses, which they have quickly and skilfully put in a state of defence; nevertheless the French were prevented from breaking through at the River Seine, where their success would have imperilled the siege-battery placed there. East of the Porte Jaune, by the highway, the men of the 58th and the Jägers repulse repeated attacks of the enemy. It was now half-past nine.

Whilst the Prussian artillery was gradually increasing in numbers, so that at 1 o'clock 36 guns were engaged on the right wing of the Corps, the French guns could not be brought into action decisively and with effect. The artillery of their left column was delayed, and remained in the brick-field; that of the centre column, detained on the march by bad roads, endeavoured in vain to gain the heights of Garches

and Montretout; the horses enfeebled by insufficient food were unable to move the heavy guns up the slopes through the deep, sodden ground; accordingly General Bellemare drew them up at Fouilleuse, where they could act with but little effect.

On the left wing of the Germans the troops of the 10th Division had been alarmed at half-past eight; the regiments of the 20th Brigade had taken up their fighting positions, the 50th on the right in touch with the 9th Division and extending as far as La Jonchère, and the 37th from there as far as the Seine; two batteries occupy the gun-pits at St. Michel.

General Ducrot had been expecting his troops with great impatience, but he utilized the time in placing almost the whole of his artillery, ten batteries, in position on both sides of Reuil; two batteries were directed against the enemy on the other side of the Seine. Without waiting for the arrival of all his troops,



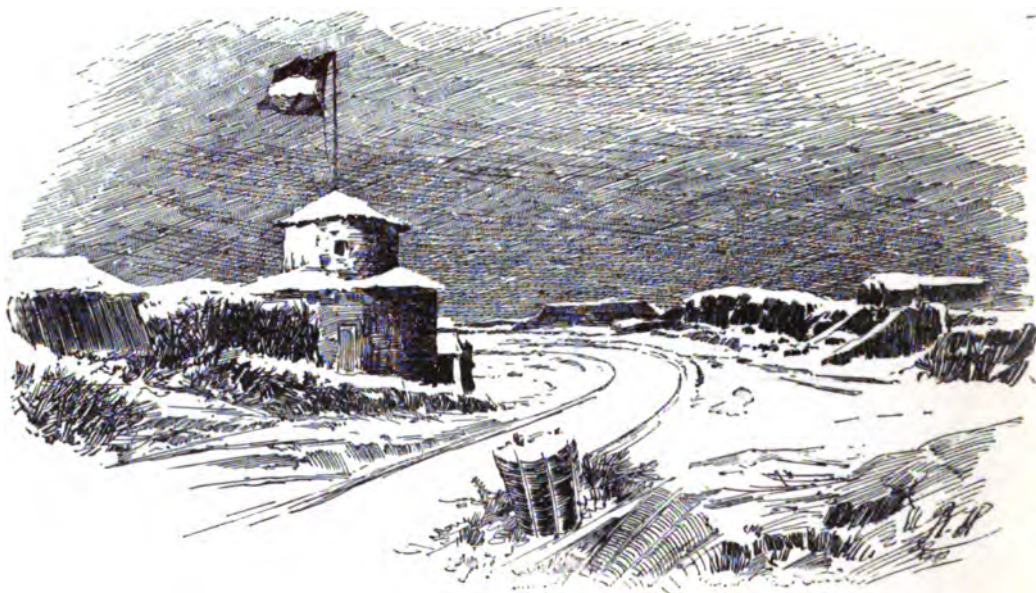
THE 90TH AND THE 160TH BATTALIONS ON THE HEIGHTS OF BUZENVAL.

Ducrot at half-past ten caused part of Berthaut's Division to attack the wall at Porte-Longboyau, held by the Prussians, whilst part advances against the flank of the Prussian infantry through the park of Buzenval. Captain von Boguslawski of the 50th Regiment, acting with vigour and resolution, repulses not only the French who have already advanced through the wall into the wood of Cucufa, but in brilliant contests, he defeats all the attacks which the enemy make with much bravery on his front and flank.

Fresh forces of the French enter the field. At 11 o'clock the position at Porte-Longboyau is again attacked, but the French, being received by a hail of shot, fall back; Susbille's Division occupies Malmaison, but on the Prussian side too the 37th Regiment hastens to the assistance of the 50th. At noon advance is arrested on both sides along the whole line. Two batteries of the Landwehr of the Guards, covered by a battalion of the same Landwehr, are posted at St. Michel and join in the artillery contest; a third battery of the Landwehr of the Guards, posted at Chatou,

bombards an iron-clad railway-train at the Rueil station, and compels it to withdraw; four batteries of the IVth Army Corps reinforce from the north of Chatou the fire of the Vth Army Corps and of the Landwehr of the Guards.

From the post of observation of the Vth Army Corps at La Jonchère, it could be distinctly seen that the enemy was calling up further reinforcements and preparing for a renewed attack on the 10th Division. Ducrot had called up Faron's Division from the Reserve. At two o'clock a fresh assault was made on Porte-Longboyau. Supported by a heavy artillery fire poured upon the Prussian positions, large bodies, about four brigades, storm against the "impassable" wall, but to no purpose; "we cannot," reports Ducrot, "take that wall, which has cost us so many brave lives."



MONT VALÉRIEN AFTER ITS CAPTURE.

After a feeble, unsuccessful fire of skirmishers against the left wing of the 10th Division, the French desist from all further attacks upon it.

Against the right wing of the Prussians also French energy collapsed. In obedience to Trochu's suggestion an attempt was made there after one o'clock to move artillery up the heights; after enormous toil four guns were got up to the intrenchment. "The first tumbles into a trench, two others sink up to the axle into the sodden ground, and the fourth is made unserviceable, being struck by a shell after it had fired only three shots."

The Crown Prince had arrived at the batteries at the hospice, which were galled by a heavy infantry fire, when soon after 2 o'clock an offensive movement ordered by General von Sandrart, the Commander of the Division, was entered upon. An attack on the southern wall of the park of Buzenval fails in spite of all our valour, and Captain von Scheve of the 59th Regiment falls at the head of his company. King's Grenadiers and Jägers burst out from Garches to storm the heights, which no

longer appear to be strongly occupied, but they are received by an infantry fire growing stronger and stronger, and at the foot of the slope their advance is arrested. Some more of the King's Grenadiers reinforce the front; supported from Bergerie on the left flank by a battalion of the 47th Regiment, the heights are stormed with "hurrahs!" at about 5 o'clock, and the enemy is pursued to Fouilleuse.

On the right wing General von Bothmer ordered five companies to attack the intrenchment, but the enemy still in possession of the houses in front of it makes all further advance impossible. Also some Jägers and a company of the 59th Regiment, under Captain Jänsch, issuing from the Porte-Jaune, with a view to protecting the left flank of this movement, are met by superior forces, and Captain Jänsch falls with a deadly wound; only a part of the Jägers succeed in reaching the heights, as the King's Grenadiers storm them.

At half-past five in the afternoon, General Trochu, being convinced of the uselessness of all further attempts, issued orders for the retreat. "The word 'retreat' had scarcely been uttered," Ducrot reports, "when in the rear part of the left wing a complete disorganisation set in; over the plain of Fouilleuse, shrouded by the darkness of a winter night, all stream back in disorder; goods and luggage-vans of the railway; omnibuses, ammunition carts, ambulances in inextricable confusion block the road, the National Guards seek safety by running across the fields in every direction, regular soldiers are in quest of their companies, of their officers."

By order of General von Kirchbach the 10th Division once more advanced against the intrenchment, but it was found to have been abandoned in the evening, and only a few prisoners were made there. But in St. Cloud the resistance continued from a few houses; these brave men had been "forgotten", and surrendered on the 20th. The retreat of the centre and right French columns was effected in a more orderly manner. Not till the morning of the 20th did the French evacuate their post in the park of Buzenval.

The Prussians lost in this battle 40 officers and 570 rank and file; the French lost 189 officers and 3881 rank and file.

THE FALL OF PARIS.

After the fall of Mont Avron the necessary steps were at once taken in the north of Paris to employ, with the best possible effect, the batteries thus set free in strengthening the lines of investment. The fall of Mézières, which occurred on the 1st of January, at last supplied an opportunity of increasing our artillery force by 40—50 guns, adding to our store of ammunition and effecting the intended support of our southern attack by a northern attack in the direction of St. Denis. The plan for this attack was first to subdue the forts of St. Denis, to conquer, or at least bring about the evacuation of, the old castle of Villeteuse, and to bombard Aubervilliers, as well as the town of St. Denis and some northern portions of Paris. Finally it was intended to occupy the forts and town of St. Denis, so as to be able to move the siege-artillery nearer to Paris. The park of siege-artillery was planted at Villiers-le-Bel. A very charming and interesting scene was here presented to our eyes. Round the railway-station, consisting of but few houses, there sprang up, American fashion, a small town, consisting of sheds, built to protect against the severity of the

weather all the matériel collected for the bombardment of St. Denis and its forts. In one place there were sheds containing many tons of gunpowder, others were used as stores for all sorts of projectiles; there were workshops, smithies, and rooms for charging the shells. Between them lay long rows of our "growlers", among which the twenty-four-pounders presented an especially distinguished appearance. Hundreds of our infantry were employed as workmen, and were busy unloading the guns from the railway-trains, placing the tubes on the carriages, etc. All this was done in most perfect order, but what a great piece of work it was to bring all the things into their places can be seen from this one fact alone: we had to requisition 700 peasant carts simply to keep things going.

On the 21st of January at 9 o'clock in the morning, in a thickish fog, the batteries opened fire and continued it with vigour. The reply from the forts did not last long, the castle of Villetaneuse was occupied by us that very evening. The German artillery succeeded in a few days in silencing the French guns, and the batteries were accordingly at once pushed forward; a magnificent sight, albeit our hearts were moved with pity when we thought of the misery and wretchedness caused by us. But it was a very agreeable sensation at last to be able properly to reply to the French artillery fire, after they had for months hurled their sugar-loaves at our heads.

In the south too the siege-batteries had gained the upper hand. Already consent had been obtained for us to occupy St. Denis and then to proceed to an energetic bombardment of Paris, when orders arrived from the German Head Quarters, in the night between the 26th and 27th, to cease firing.

All the enemy's works had suffered considerably; the ramparts were much knocked about, many of the casemates were broken in, the barracks destroyed or burnt down. A fine laurel in the wreath of victory for our Artillery! It lost 30 officers and 350 rank and file killed and wounded; the French losses are estimated at 800. In consequence of the bombardment of the city, the inhabitants streamed in crowds to safer parts of the city or took refuge in cellars, thus rendering the distribution of food more difficult. The civil population is reported to have lost in the bombardment 97 killed and 278 wounded.

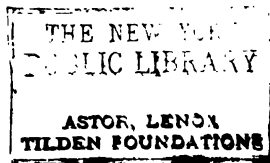
The first news about the unfavourable result of the battle of Mont Valérien, the battalions of the National Guards returning in disorder, and the subsequent bombardment of St. Denis stimulated the excitement of the Parisians to the highest pitch. The mob, blind to the conviction of soldiers of profession, that the fall of Paris could no longer be averted, called the Generals "Traitors", the men "Cowards". The populace demanded new sallies; gatherings of all the evil elements, becoming from hour to hour more and more conscious of their power, had to be met by the public force. The unreliability of the National Guards became ever more evident; unfavourable news came in about the Second Army of the Loire at Le Mans; an investigation of the stores in hand shewed that they sufficed for but a few days, so that the spectre of famine in visible form stared the population in the face. On the 22nd Trochu was deposed from his Governorship of Paris, and the post was not filled again. He retained the Presidency in the Cabinet. Ducrot resigned his command, and Vinoy became Commander-in-Chief.

All these changes were, however, unable to retard the fall of Paris; Jules Favre appeared on the 23rd in Versailles to negotiate the capitulation. It was high time



ON THE LINE OF DEMARCATION AT CHARENTON NEAR PARIS.

[face p. 324.



that supplies of provisions should come to Paris, but the Germans granted permission only on condition that all the forts and the town of St. Denis be surrendered and the walls be disarmed; these concessions being considered necessary to secure the advantages that had been gained.

At the stroke of midnight, 26th—27th, firing ceased in the German batteries, and the echo of the last discharge against the enemy's Capital died away. The Parisians once more had access to the country outside Paris. The armistice began on the 28th; 602 field-guns, 177,000 small arms, 1200 ammunition-waggons, 1362 pieces of fortress artillery and a quantity of ammunition fell into the hands of the conquerors. The garrison were declared prisoners of war, and, with the exception of 12,000 men to keep order in the capital, all the troops of the Line were to deliver up their arms at once. When, during the negotiations, Bismarck drew Jules Favre's attention to the danger of allowing the National Guards to retain their arms, and of letting disarmed, idle soldiers be in contact with a demoralised and rebellious populace, instead of assembling them in camps on the peninsulas of Gennevilliers and St. Maur, Favre replied, that he knew very well what he was doing, that he had perfect confidence in the people of Paris, and would not subject the National Guards to the humiliation of having to lay down their arms. "Much later," Chuquet reports, "Favre said: 'I ask pardon for this of God and of the world.'"

On the 29th the forts and St. Denis were occupied. The streets leading out of Paris were now the scenes of peculiar bustle and activity. Thousands of people who wished to leave Paris either for some length of time, or for a few hours to procure food, endeavoured to pass through the lines without the prescribed passports from the Government of Paris; thousands were turned away and again tried their luck elsewhere; hundreds succeeded with individual sentries in getting through, our men being good-natured and pitiful when they saw the starved men, on whose faces distress, terror and privations were written in legible characters. The Preliminaries of Peace were signed, and on the 1st of March 30,000 German soldiers enter Paris and hundreds of officers hasten to visit the City.¹

¹ About the entry of the first Germans into Paris, Lieutenant-Colonel von Bernhardt has sent to the present editor the following interesting communication: "On the 1st of March we, the 1st Squadron of the 2nd Regiment of Hessian Hussars, stood ready at the bridge of Neuilly, which



GENERAL V. KAMEKE.

Chief of the siege-works and Commandant of the occupied part of Paris.

Through the brilliant Champs Elysées our road led us to the Place de l'Etoile, where the Arc-de-Triomphe stands, and beyond to the Place-de-la-Concorde. The French were not much in evidence on the 2nd of March, only at the barriers which formed the line of demarcation there stood people smitten by curiosity. All houses, shops, cafés were shut, German soldiers bivouacking and sauntering about everywhere. On the Place-de-la-Concorde, where during the Revolution of 1792, 2700 heads fell under the guillotine, rises the well-known obelisk of Luxor, brought here from old Thebes of Egypt. Round it stand eight statues, representing the greatest cities of France. The French had tied crape round the faces of these statues! Comical fellows! The statue of Strassburg was covered with black flags and wreaths. On to the Place du Roi de Rome—a magnificent spot, situated at a considerable elevation—broad steps lead down to the Pont de Jena, and beyond the Seine there lay spread before us the mighty expanse of the Champ-de-Mars, upon which a few years before there had been the great exhibition; now it was covered with hundreds of tents and huts, housing French troops. Twelve German guns were placed up there, two battalions bivouacked on the turf by the flight of steps; we were the masters of Paris!

There was no further entry of troops, peace having been signed, but a great parade of the Guards Corps was held on the 3rd at Longchamps. Some of our men had to start very early for it; glorious weather, a magnificent ground; three Infantry Divisions, Cavalry and Artillery found room there; the delightful consciousness of peace being at hand, and the admirable bearing of our soldiers made this parade one of the most beautiful, at all events one of the most memorable, that has ever been held. After the parade the King expressed in fervent words to the Generals and Staff-Officers his Royal thanks for the achievements of the troops in the war, and the

the French had blocked by a wall. My Captain, Von Colomb, ordered me to enter at a gallop and to detach small patrols into the side-streets. I myself, as leader of the 1st troop, rode at the head. The squadron followed at a slower pace, and behind them the 1st Battalion of the 87th Regiment. The whole detachment was detailed as an escort to the quartermasters, while the troops told off for the entry were on parade at Longchamps. When the command was given to advance—I believe punctually at 10 o'clock—I put myself in motion with my troop. The leading files, carbine in hand, the rest with drawn swords—and we advanced in full gallop through the long empty avenue as far as the Arc-de-Triomphe. Here a dense mass of men rushed up at me, and I was already thinking I should have to make use of arms, when I heard the well-known guttural sounds of the sons of Albion: 'What's your name? What regiment?' etc. They were all of them newspaper correspondents. Frenchmen were to be seen only here and there. I halted before the Arc-de-Triomphe, till my troop was assembled and the squadron had come up—then we advanced towards the Place-de-la-Concorde. My troop and the squadron marched round the Arc-de-Triomphe, underneath which the ground was broken up. I, with the leading men, leapt at a gallop over the chains which encircle the monument, and went in front of my troop. On the Place-de-la-Concorde I was put on picquet. Meanwhile a huge multitude had collected—the whole place was crammed full, and being in continuous danger of being crushed, I had to be incessantly moving to find breathing space. So we were kept there till the afternoon, and were then relieved by Bavarian Uhlans. We officers afterwards dined with General von Kameke in the palace of Queen Christine, where our Head-quarters were, and in the evening there was a tattoo and retreat by the massed bands, all the bands present attending, an impressive and memorable scene. At prayer the Parisian masses stood about, all uncovered. The squadron had medals struck from the metal of French guns, on one side of which was engraved the number of the Regiment and of the squadron, and on the other the Arc-de-Triomphe with the date 1st March, 1871. All of us still possess the medal."

typical example they once more had set. He was deeply moved; we could all of us have kissed his hands, so modest and genuinely Royal was our exalted Lord!

On the 21st of March, towards evening, after a return from a ride in the neighbourhood of St. Denis, the Officers of the Staff of the 1st Infantry Division of the Guards encountered the procession of the great tattoo on the eve of the festival of the 22nd. Hundreds of torches, four bodies of drummers, two bands of musicians, hundreds of officers and thousands of soldiers marched through the main streets of the city; a splendid scene, a mighty effect!

When the cathedral, which once held the ashes of the French Kings, shone in Bengal light, and the evening prayer was played in front of it, the French stood about astounded; they could not understand our soldiers, along with the music, raising one "hurrah!" after another, and everything passing off without disturbance.

On the 22nd of March, 1871, at 10 o'clock there was a great Divine Service in the court of the Legion of Honour at St. Denis. At 11 o'clock the artillery of the east front, at 12 o'clock that of the north front thundered forth the Imperial salute: a historic moment, the like of which is not easily found in history! At 4 o'clock dinner at the Legion d'Honneur, to the great "chagrin" of the Lady Resident, who considers it a desecration that the "Barbarians" should celebrate their Emperor's birthday in these rooms. When General von Pape, the Commander of the Division, proposed the Emperor's health, the artillery once more joined in with its thunders. And whilst the thunder of the German artillery announced the festival of their Emperor, echoing from the fields round Paris home to Germany, from the northern sea-shore to lake Constance, whilst nature adorned herself with new flowers and verdure and trees burst into blossom, leaves and buds shone with renewed life, amidst a brilliant air, and whilst a temperature like that of the month of June delighted and refreshed us, there resounded the artillery thunder of the fratricidal conflict in the interior of the city which we held encircled, and the first flames of their revolt mounted to heaven! What a fate, that we the conquerors were doomed to be witnesses for many weeks of the furious raging of Frenchmen against each other. Impressions to last one for one's life! By day and night in some place or another tall flames rose from burning Paris; the contest that we saw, the resurrection of the figures of 1792, women armed and clad in hideous costume, men half naked, with hatchets and guns in hand. Who, that has seen them, could ever forget them?

May the images of those days be ever and again brought home to the minds of German youth, that they may see that the ideals of humanity must be held aloft, that no people on earth can without religion, morality, order and justice escape heavy conflicts, and that the races of Germany must remain united in fealty and faith to Emperor and Empire!

CHAPTER IX

THE CAMPAIGN OF THE FIRST ARMY IN THE NORTH OF FRANCE

By WILHELM BIGGE

Major on the Special Staff¹ of the Great General Staff, Teacher in the Academy of War.

ADVANCE OF THE FIRST ARMY AS FAR AS THE OISE

WITH the fall of Metz on the 27th of October, 1870, the First Army, consisting of the Ist, VIIth and VIIIth Corps, the 3rd Infantry Division of the Reserve and the 3rd Division of Cavalry,² was relieved of its duties in connection with the Investing Army, of which it had formed part, and became disposable for action in the open field. At that time newly raised French forces were advancing from all sides upon Paris, to relieve the Capital, which had been surrounded by the Germans since the 19th of September. Of these several attempts only those from the Loire and from the West at first seemed specially threatening, but also in the northern provinces of France reconnoitring parties sent out from Paris had encountered resistance, which was increasing day by day.

Under these circumstances the German Commander-in-Chief ordered the First Army to occupy Metz, to escort the Metz prisoners to Germany, to besiege Thionville and Montmédy, and to advance with at least two Army Corps to the north of France, and thus to protect the German Armies outside Paris from attacks from that quarter. The Chief Command over the First Army, which General von Steinmetz had resigned some time before, was transferred to General von Manteuffel, who till then had been General Commanding the Ist Army Corps, and who still retained for the while the Command of this Ist Army Corps as well.

Edwin Baron von Manteuffel was one of the most experienced and most distinguished Generals of the Prussian Army. He was born in the year 1809, and descended from an old Pomeranian family. He had early entered the Army, and before attaining the rank of commander of a regiment, had found opportunity in several advantageous staff appointments to gain military experience and, above all, to become intimately acquainted with the personal circumstances relating to the officers of the Prussian Army. For that reason King Frederick William IV appointed Colonel von Manteuffel Chief of the Military Cabinet, which has to decide on questions of promotion and compulsory retirement of officers. In this post Manteuffel rendered the Army great

¹ 'Nebenetat', a department of the Great General Staff of the German Army. It has to do with scientific (wissenschaftlich) work, and certain intelligence duties. [*Trs.*]

² Strength of the First Army: 56 Battalions, 40 Squadrons, 33 Batteries, 6 Companies of Pioneers.

service carrying through as he did with tact and firmness a scheme for reducing the age of the Corps of Officers, especially of the higher grades, thus placing at the head of the troops men of capacity and youthful vigour. Up to the year of 1865 Manteuffel remained Chief of the Military Cabinet, then, as Lieutenant-General, he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the troops in Schleswig-Holstein. In the year 1866 he gained military glory, first as Commander of a Division of the Army of the Maine, and next as Commander-in-Chief of the whole of this army. To his skill and energy it is mainly due that the final results of the war in West Germany turned out so favourably to Prussia. After the war of 1866 Manteuffel was appointed Commander of the IXth Corps, and in 1868 he was in like capacity transferred to the Ist Corps. His share in the battles of Colombey—Neuilly (Augt. 14) and Noisseville (Augt. 31 and September 1) has been fully described in a previous chapter.

General von Manteuffel entrusted the duty of escorting the prisoners, of occupying Metz and of besieging Thionville to the VIIth Army Corps and to the 3rd Division of the Reserve. (Of this latter, however, only the Brigade of the Infantry of the Line, the Cavalry and the Artillery were in future to be employed in the open field.¹) There were, moreover, detached from the Ist Army Corps, the Ist Division of Infantry to reinforce the troops besieging the fortress of Mézières, and the 4th Infantry Brigade to invest La Fère. With the remnant of the First Army thus largely reduced, General von Manteuffel now resolved to advance as far as the line St. Quentin—Compiègne, so as to be in a position to move against

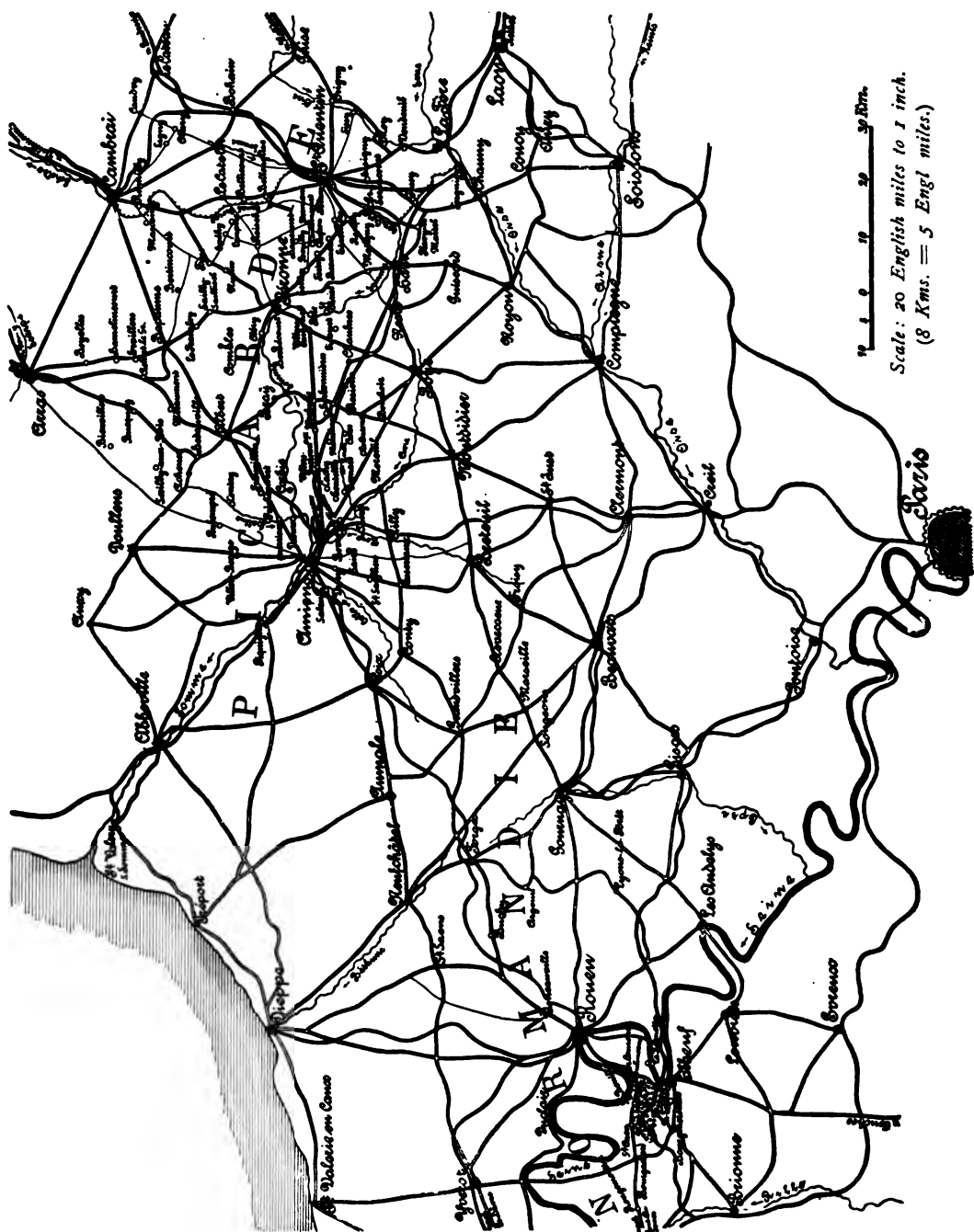
the enemy in the open field as circumstances should dictate. But primarily the woody mountain-range of the Argonnes had to be swept clean of the numerous bands of Franks-tireurs which infested it, and thus a clear and unobstructed path made for the march of the Army. Accordingly, as early as on the 28th of October the 3rd Cavalry Division and the 33rd Regiment of Fusiliers of the VIIIth Corps moved forward in forced marches and searched the Argonne forest in every direction, without, however, lighting upon any considerable number of Franks-tireurs. The French peasants who engaged in this kind of trade were wont, when considerable German forces were approach-



GENERAL V. MANTEUFFEL.

¹ The 3rd Reserve Division had 1 brigade of regular infantry as well as 2 brigades of reserve infantry. [*Trs.*]

ing to hide their rifles and present themselves as harmless people. They only looked out for isolated patrols and detachments and shot them down from an ambush.



MAP GIVING A GENERAL VIEW OF THE CAMPAIGN OF THE FIRST ARMY IN THE NORTH OF FRANCE.

On the 7th of November, then, the main body of the First Army began its forward march on a broad front. The weather by that time had become cool and

autumnal, but the march on good roads and in prosperous West Lorraine was recreation to the troops after their enforced inaction in their often undesirable quarters outside Metz. The vigorous exercise was beneficial to men and horses, and soon the state of health was excellent. On the 10th and 11th of November the Argonne forest was crossed, and then the Army traversed the wide, sparsely populated plains of Champagne, the scene of the bloody battle in 461 of the West Romans and the Goths against Attila and his Huns. On the 15th of November the left wing, the VIIIth Army Corps, arrived in the neighbourhood of Reims, the ancient coronation city of the Kings of France, and the right wing, the 1st Army Corps, arrived at the town of Rethel on the River Aisne. Between the two the 3rd Division of Cavalry moved forward, reconnoitring the country in front. Giving his troops a day of rest, General von Manteuffel on the 16th of November ordered the right wing to reach Noyon by the 21st, and thence to reconnoitre towards Amiens; the original plan of extending this wing as far as St. Quentin was abandoned on account of its reduced numbers, three infantry brigades of the 1st Army Corps having been detached. In order to cover the right flank the 3rd Division of Cavalry had to move forward to Guiscard, and also to reconnoitre in the direction of Amiens, where strong forces of the enemy were supposed to be. The left wing was to arrive on the same day (21st) at Compiègne, then to push forward advanced guards towards Montdidier and Beauvais, and establish communication with the Army of the Maas outside Paris. At the same time arrangements were made to bring back to the Army the 1st Division of Infantry, which was now no longer required at Mézières.

The tract of country between the Aisne and the Oise, which was now being entered upon, is very much enclosed and it is difficult to obtain a view over it; it was therefore very well fitted for defence by the French. Nevertheless no hostile forces worth mentioning were anywhere encountered, but according to reports which came in, new bodies of troops were being hastily raised in the northern provinces of France, principally in the numerous fortresses there, and considerable forces were being collected at Lille, Amiens and Rouen.

Up to the 25th of November the First Army carried out undisturbedly its march to the River Oise; at this time too the foremost troops of the 1st Division came up at Noyon. On the 21st the Commander-in-Chief at Soissons had received fresh orders from the Great Head-quarters at Versailles, directing the First Army to continue its march as far as Rouen and, if the enemy's action made it advisable, to make a détour via Amiens. In any case, this latter place, the capital of Picardy, was to be occupied with a large force, to prevent the concentration of hostile forces there.

Ere we follow further the doings of the German troops, it is necessary to cast a look at the enemy that they expected to encounter.

FORMATION OF THE NORTHERN ARMY OF FRANCE.

Up to the end of September little had been done in Normandy, Picardy and French Flanders to organize and increase the forces that were still existing there; but when Gambetta's energy made itself felt in the provinces they began here also to create a nucleus of troops. A certain M. Testelin, a physician from Lille, was nominated "Commissary of Defence" for the department of the North, and entered on

his arduous duty with skill and energy. As military assistant and counsellor he appointed General Farre, an officer of Engineers.

Only a few remnants of reserve troops at that time existed in the garrisons and fortresses of northern France, and these, although too feeble to march against the enemy, were numerous enough to form a nucleus for new formations. The latter were to consist partly of newly raised recruits, partly of the already existing Gardes Mobiles (corresponding somewhat to the Landwehr), and partly of the mobilized National Guards (Landsturm). The efforts of M. Testelin were powerfully seconded by the arrival via Belgium of numerous officers and soldiers of the Imperial Army, who had escaped from Metz, or Sedan, or from captivity. These men of experience and a few battalions of marines gave to these newly formed troops greater steadiness than the other republican armies were wont to possess, a circumstance which must not be overlooked in making a correct estimate of the difficulties the First Army of the Germans had to contend with, and the strong resistance it had to encounter.



GENERAL FARRE.

There was a great lack of cavalry among the French, but the artillery was fairly well supplied with guns, especially of large calibre, taken from the fortresses, and England too was quite ready for round sums to send over the needful arms. In the infantry the troops of the line were armed with chassepots, the Gardes Mobiles and National Guards with rifles of older pattern. The authorities engaged in this work succeeded by their united and strenuous efforts in placing in the field, even as early as the middle of November, three Brigades of Infantry, one Regiment of Dragoons and seven Batteries, which assumed the designation of the "XXIInd Army Corps." General Lecointe commanded the 1st Brigade, Colonel

Derroja the 2nd, and Colonel du Bessol the 3rd. The total strength of these troops probably did not then exceed 20,000 men. Their first Commander-in-Chief was Bourbaki, the whilom Commander of the French Guards Corps. He had been shut up in Metz, but had received leave from the German Commanders to go to London to the Empress Eugenie, to open peace negotiations with her. As, however, the Empress declined to interfere he did not return to Metz, but placed himself at the disposal of the Government at Tours, and was by them sent to the north to organize the forces there. So soon, however, as the 20th of November he was recalled to the Loire to command the XVIIIth Army Corps, and his place was taken by General Faidherbe, who had commanded a Division in Algiers. Till the arrival of the latter, General Farre, mentioned above, undertook the command of the XXIInd Army Corps.

Now as the First German Army was approaching nearer and nearer to the Oise, they began to feel alarmed about the safety of the important line of railway, Lille—

Amiens—Rouen, which is the only communication by land between the north and the west and south of France. Amiens being the most suitable place for the defence of that line, it was decided to assemble there all the available forces. But no arrangements were made for acting in conjunction with the Gardes Mobiles under General Briant assembling at Rouen, and this gave the Germans the opportunity of beating the two forces separately. On the 22nd of November the XXIInd Army Corps began their march, and on the 25th they took up, south and south-east of Amiens, a position which we shall presently come to know more fully. Besides the XXIInd Army Corps there were in Amiens 8000 Gardes Mobiles, commanded by General Paulze d'Ivoy.

ADVANCE OF THE FIRST ARMY FROM THE OISE AS FAR AS THE LUCE.

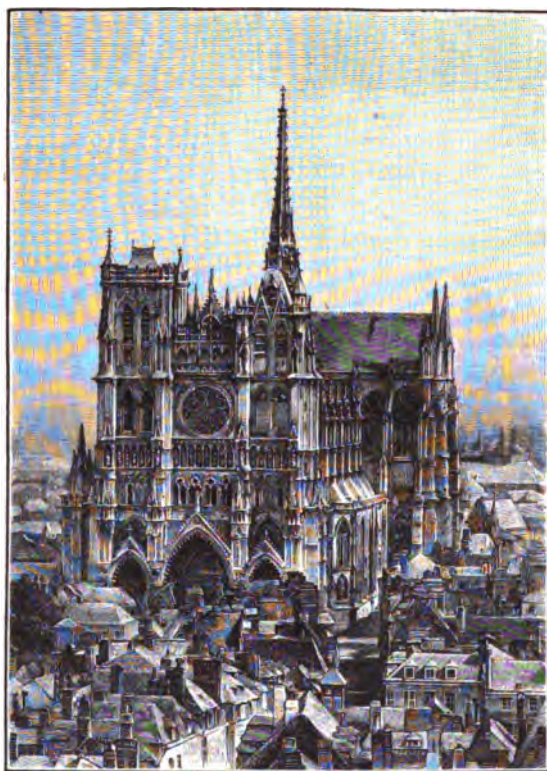
When the First Army arrived at the Oise, its cavalry was already making incursions far into Picardy, and from their reports it was known that the enemy's forces on the Lower Somme were increasing. General von Manteuffel resolved therefore to advance upon Amiens, and he was all the more convinced of the necessity of this step, as the late evacuation of Orleans by the Bavarians had inspired the excitable French population with new hopes, the futility of which would best be shewn by a rapid victory in the north.

The 3rd Division of Cavalry was therefore ordered on the 25th of November to take up a position at Moreuil, south-east of Amiens, and reconnoitre to the front and flanks. The 1st Army Corps, of which General von Bentheim, the Commander of the 1st Division of Infantry, now took over command, was ordered on the same day, 25th of November, to advance into the neighbourhood of Roye, while the 1st Division should come on to rejoin it; at the same time the VIIIth Army Corps was ordered to advance to Montdidier, and to send a detachment to Breteuil to cover the flank and to gain touch with the troops of the Army of the Maas posted at Clermont. In the execution of these orders the heads of the 3rd Division of Cavalry encountered French troops at the River Luce, which between Moreuil and Amiens crosses the roads leading to this latter city, and thus touch was gained with the enemy. The other portions of the First Army reached their several points of destination on the 25th; the Head Quarters moved to Montdidier.

From the reports that came in, it was clear that the further advance would not be unresisted, although nothing certain was known about the strength and the position of the enemy. Convinced that a rapid victory would be the most effective, and trusting to the oft-tried valour of his troops, General von Manteuffel determined on an immediate attack, even without waiting for that part of the 1st Corps which had not yet come up. But first, on the 26th of November, the army was to be concentrated and moved nearer to the enemy; accordingly the 3rd Brigade of Infantry moved on the 26th to Le Quesnel and Caix, the Corps Artillery to Bouchoir, and those parts of the 1st Division of Infantry that had already arrived to Roye and beyond it. Of the VIIIth Corps the 15th Division of Infantry occupied, after a slight contest, Moreuil and Ailly and pushed forward advanced troops as far as Thézy. The 16th Division advanced as far the junction of the roads at Essertaux, west of Ailly; the 3rd Division of Cavalry from Rosières covered the right flank of the army towards St. Quentin and Péronne.

On the evening of the 26th of November the infantry of the First Army extended over a front of 18 to 19 English miles, this being intersected by several streams. From the conduct of the enemy it was inferred that his main forces were posted behind the Somme, and that on the hither side of the river he would merely defend Amiens. General von Manteuffel resolved therefore on the 27th to further concentrate his forces towards the front and the left, and not to make an attack before the 28th. But as a matter of fact the enemy had, as we know, taken up a fortified position to the south and south-east of Amiens, in consequence of which the battle had to be begun on the 27th, contrary to the wish of the General in Command. The German Commanders cannot escape the reproach that the position of the enemy had not been sufficiently reconnoitred; had this been done, the Prussian troops would have been saved many perils on the day of battle, and the success would have been far more pronounced.

THE BATTLE OF AMIENS ON THE 27TH OF NOVEMBER.



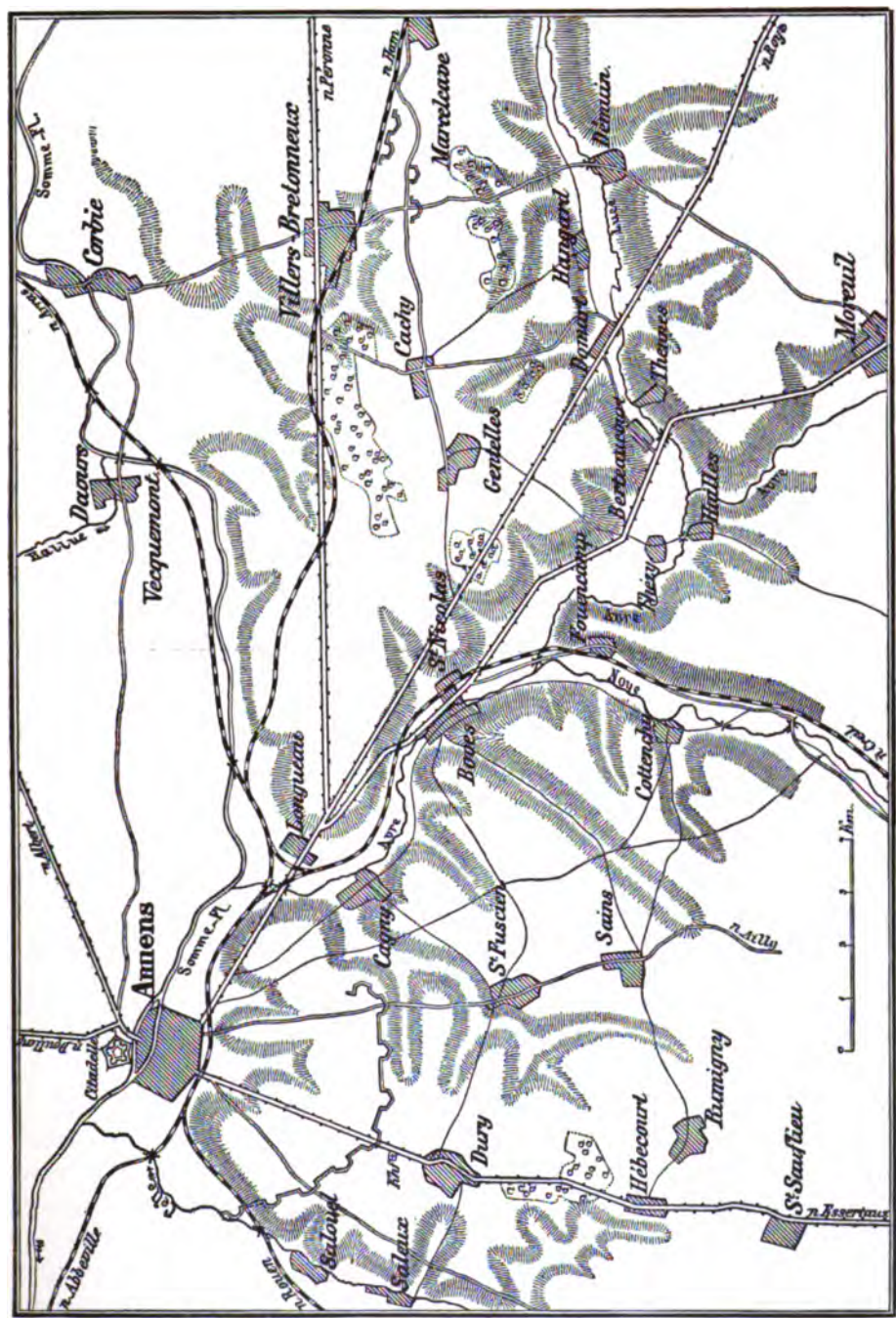
AMIENS CATHEDRAL.

The battle-field of Amiens lies to the south of the city of Amiens and of the river Somme. The somewhat deep cuttings made in the meadows by the watercourses of the Avre, the Noye and the Luce divide it into several sections, and these again are crossed by small transverse valleys. The numerous villages are compact and strongly built, and thus well fitted for defence. Small copses of woodland scattered along the heights afford additional advantages to the defenders. The valley of the Somme at the rear of the French position is swampy and can be crossed only by made roads.

At the south of Amiens and close to the city the French had constructed a connected chain of entrenchments, which extended from the valley of the brook Celle below Salouel, in a curve as far as the neighbourhood of the village of Cagny on the Avre. To defend these the 8000 Gardes Mobiles were posted under General Paulze d'Ivoye, and

their advanced posts were moved forward into the neighbourhood of Hébecourt. The XXIInd Army Corps of the French joined on to them on the east, having four battalions of the 2nd Brigade (Derroja) at Boves and St. Nicolas, one Chasseur battalion

at Fouencamp and two battalions in reserve at Longueau. Further to the east the 3rd Brigade (Du Bessol) occupied the villages Gentelles, Cachy and Villers-Bretonneux.



Scale: 3 English miles to 1 inch.

neux. To the south of this latter place, along the road from Cachy to Marcelcave and along the line of rail, additional entrenchments had been constructed and strongly

occupied. During the night the 1st Brigade (Lecointe) was at Amiens, but during the day it came up, passing through Longueau, and sent off $2\frac{1}{2}$ battalions to support Du Bessol's Brigade. The whole position was beyond doubt too extended for the forces at the disposal of the French Commanders, several gaps, occurring mainly at the centre of their position, favouring the German attempts to pierce the French lines.

The battle split itself up into a series of isolated combats, which must be separately described.

THE CONTEST ABOUT THE POSITION VILLERS-BRETONNEUX—GENTELLES.

The advanced guard of the 1st Army-Corps—the 3rd Infantry Brigade (4th and 44th Regiments) with three squadrons of the 10th Dragoons and 3 batteries—was ordered to seize the line Marcelcave – Gentelles, so as to enable the main body of the army to advance as far as the River Luce. At 10 o'clock in the morning it crossed the brook in three columns and ascended the slopes on the other side, encountering Frenchmen at every point. The left column (six companies of the 4th Regiment of Grenadiers, one squadron and one battery) took Gentelles after a short contest, and thence kept up a fierce fire against Cachy, which was held by a strong force of the enemy. This place was also attacked by the centre column (four companies of the 4th Regiment, one squadron and one battery), but the advance of this column was checked by swarms of French skirmishers, and consequently the contest on the left wing of the 3rd Brigade now became stationary.

Meanwhile the right column (two companies of the 4th Regiment, the whole 44th Regiment, one squadron and one battery) had advanced to the attack of the entrenchments south of Villers-Bretonneux, these were defended with great tenacity, but finally taken by the East Prussians at the point of the bayonet. Within the entrenchments they fought hand to hand, but the French being finally overcome, fell back upon Villers-Bretonneux. The 44th Regiment now put the conquered positions in a state of defence, for the enemy's resistance was by no means broken; indeed he soon made ready to retake the *points d'appui* he had lost.

At about 1 o'clock the above-mentioned $2\frac{1}{2}$ French battalions of Lecointe's Brigade arrived on this part of the field, and this encouraged the French to attack the thin Prussian lines in several places; meanwhile, however, this too had received reinforcements, viz., the 1st Grenadier Regiment (the Crown Prince's) and the Corps Artillery. Thus strengthened, the Germans not only succeeded in victoriously repulsing the attack at every point, but also in gaining possession of Villers-Bretonneux. With loud hurrahs and at the beat of drum the Crown Prince Grenadiers, followed closely by the neighbouring portions of the 4th and 44th Regiments, enter the village and eject the enemy, who up to that moment had borne himself bravely, but now in the darkness of the night fled in disorder to the passage of the Somme at Corbie. Only on the left wing of the 1st Corps the French still maintain their position. The Prussian troops here having spent all their ammunition were unable to renew their attacks. During the night, however, the enemy quitted also this part of the field, being threatened in his flank by the loss of Villers-Bretonneux.

THE EVENTS IN THE CENTRE OF THE BATTLE-FIELD.

General von Manteuffel, who, from the heights south of Gentelles, had been watching the contests of the 1st Corps, soon noticed that the country between Gentelles and Fouencamp was unoccupied by any Prussian troops; accordingly he ordered a battalion of the 28th Regiment, which had been protecting the Head Quarters during the night, and a squadron of the King's Hussars to take up there a position covering the important passages across the Luce at Berteaucourt and Domart. Towards noon he also ordered the VIIIth Corps, which was advancing on the other side of the Avre, to move by Fouencamp and to join in the heavy fighting in which the 3rd Brigade was engaged. But General von Göben was unable to execute this order, his whole corps being engaged.

Fortunately for the Germans, their enemy remained the whole day inactive in the centre of the field. Not till 4.30 p.m., when evening was already setting in, did the remainder of Lecointe's Brigade ($3\frac{1}{2}$ battalions) make an advance; this attack might have become dangerous, but it was made without energy, and darkness soon put a stop to the fight. Thus in the evening the watercourse of the River Luce was throughout in the hands of the German troops, who placed outposts along the northern edge of the valley.

THE CONTEST BETWEEN THE AVRE AND THE CELLE. AMIENS.

The VIIIth Corps also everywhere encountered resistance on its march to the night-quarters assigned to it behind the line Fouencamp—St. Fuscien—Dury.

On its right wing the 30th Brigade of the 15th Division advanced in the valley of the Noye and Avre, and the 29th Brigade moved forward via Sains. The former took Fouencamp which was only held by a small force, and then turned upon St. Nicolas. After a fierce contest and obstinate defence the 28th and 68th Regiments took the place, whereupon the enemy fell back in disorder upon Longueau.

At the same time part of the 29th Brigade seized the village of Boves. From Sains it had pushed forward to St. Fuscien two battalions of the 65th Regiment, and it then sent forward the fusilier battalion of the same regiment and two companies of the 33rd Regiment along the road Fouencamp to Boves, to support the 30th Brigade. These troops succeeded in storming the place, which the French desperately defended, especially from an old ruin of a castle situated on an elevation; this success put an end to all resistance on this part of the field. In the evening the 15th Division was able to place outposts in the line Boves—St. Fuscien and to occupy quarters in rear.

On the extreme left wing of the First Army the 16th Division, commanded by Lieutenant-General von Barnekow, had marched from Essertaux, past Sauflieu, towards Dury. Already at Hébecourt and Rumigny the 32nd Infantry Brigade, which was at the head of the advancing column, encountered the enemy's advanced troops, who, however, speedily fell back on a small wood situated in rear. On this occasion two squadrons of the 9th Regiment of Hussars charged a French battalion and scattered it almost entirely. Within the wood the French at first shewed a bold front, but parts of the 40th and 70th Regiments soon drove them in disorder to Dury. When afterwards the 32nd Brigade had assembled and reformed along the edge of the wood, General von

Göben, who was on the spot, ordered Dury to be attacked. This place was also captured, and with it the churchyard to the rear of it; at last, however, the Germans arrived at the entrenchments south of Amiens, from which the French kept up a vigorous fire with heavy marine artillery. As evening was approaching and the conduct of the enemy seemed to indicate an obstinate resistance, General von Göben put a stop to the engagement, in order to renew it on the next day with refreshed forces. The 32nd Brigade placed outposts in Dury and bivouacked south of the place; the 31st Brigade had followed as a reserve, and passed the night in Hébecourt.

General von Manteuffel in the evening went to Moreuil, where he received the reports about the issue of the battle. The intrenchments in front of Amiens and at Longueau led the Germans to expect a renewal of the fight on the following day; the Commander therefore resolved first to concentrate his forces more completely, and to call up the missing portions of the 1st Corps; but the patrols advancing in the morning, found that the French had evacuated all their positions and even the city of Amiens. When the sun had fully risen, strong columns of the enemy were seen on the other side of the river, departing in a northerly and north-easterly direction. At noon General von Göben at the head of the 32nd Brigade made a victorious entry in the Capital of Picardy.

On the Prussian side the losses amounted to 76 officers and 1216 rank and file killed and wounded; the French lost 1383 in dead and wounded and 1000 missing.

The results of the battle disappointed both parties; the French had to abandon the city, in defence of which they had accepted battle, and the Germans failed to inflict a decisive defeat upon their enemy, who, on the contrary, derived encouragement for future contests from the partial local success he had gained. The insignificance of the results attained was due to the forces having been split up into small sections, so that a decisive superiority was nowhere established. The battle consisted of a series of isolated contests, having but little connection with each other, and the events in the centre of the field were most surprising; it was occupied only by the German Commander-in-Chief and by his escort, consisting of one battalion and one squadron. This feeble body of men constituted the only connection between the two wings of his army engaged in the contest, and yet the centre was the most important point of the whole line. In the evening, moreover, superior forces of the enemy made an attack on that very point, but, fortunately for the Germans, without energy.

On the 27th of November the 3rd Cavalry Division had but little to do. During the combat at Villers-Bretonneux it took a position east of Marcelcave, and sent forward its artillery to join in the engagement; in every other respect it restricted itself to observing the River Somme above Corbie.

A few days afterwards the citadel of Amiens, in presence of a threatened bombardment, surrendered with its garrison, consisting of 400 Gardes Mobile.

ADVANCE UPON ROUEN.

By their early departure from Amiens the French Army of the North had gained so great a start that a pursuit by the Prussians appeared entirely futile, and to accompany the enemy as far as the fortresses of Arras and Cambrai was not in

General von Manteuffel's power; moreover, this attempt was foreign to the task set him, viz., to take Rouen and to cover towards the north-west the army investing Paris; he therefore determined at once on the 28th of November to resume his movements upon Rouen. But to cover his rear he left at Amiens the 3rd Brigade of Infantry and the greater part of the 3rd Cavalry Division, the whole under the command of Lieutenant-General Count von der Gröben, the Commander of the Cavalry Division.

The onward march of the German troops, commencing on the 30th of November, was arranged as follows: the VIIIth Corps was to march along the line of railway Amiens—Rouen; the 1st Corps¹ was to advance on its left and in line with it.

The Great Head-Quarters had placed at General von Manteuffel's disposal the 12th (Royal Saxon) Cavalry Division under Count Lippe, posted at Gisor on the Epte, and the Brigade of Prussian Dragoon-Guards posted at Gournay. These bodies of cavalry were to accompany the movements of the First Army, covering its left flank.

At Rouen there had assembled, under the command of General Briand, about 22,000 French Gardes Mobiles with 32 guns, but their efficiency was by no means on a level with that of the Army of the North, since they were less steady from want of a nucleus of trained soldiers; nevertheless General Briand



ROUEN.

preferred to face the advancing Germans rather than evacuate the Capital of Normandy without striking a blow. He occupied an intrenched position at Isneauville, north-east of Rouen, and sent forward advanced troops as far as the line Lyons-la-Forêt—Argeuil—Forges—Neufchâtel.

Consequently on the 4th of December a series of small contests took place, in which the French were easily worsted. A few rounds of shell and the deploying of some lines of skirmishers generally sufficed to drive them back. Many hid in copses or farms, or voluntarily surrendered, and accordingly General Briand speedily had to quit the field. By the 5th of December the German scouting parties advancing upon Rouen found the whole country east of the city, and finally the city itself, free from the enemy. Spite of the threatening attitude of the inhabitants, two squadrons of the King's Hussars rode early in the morning into the market-place of Rouen; in the afternoon General von Göben followed at the head of the 32nd Infantry Brigade, and late in the afternoon the 29th Brigade also entered the city.

¹ This Corps had now also been rejoined by 4th Infantry Brigade after the fall of La Fère.

On the left bank of the Seine General Briand had moved through Pontaudemer to Honfleur, and by ships kept in readiness transported his troops to Le Havre, where they found shelter and repose. The 29th Infantry Brigade which was sent after them in pursuit could only pick up stragglers, and returned after a few days. Rouen was now garrisoned by the VIIIth Corps; the 1st took up its quarters south of the city on both banks of the Seine, thus being in communication with the Third Army by means of the 5th Division of Cavalry posted at Evreux.

DIVISION OF THE FIRST ARMY, AND MARCH OF THE VIIIth CORPS TO AMIENS.

General von Manteuffel having captured Rouen, had performed the task set him. On the 9th of December he received fresh orders from the Great Head-Quarters. He

was bidden to hold Rouen, and if it should appear necessary to continue his march westwards towards Le Havre. The object to be kept in view, wrote General von Moltke, was in future, as in the past, to disperse all the hostile forces appearing in the field, and hostilities against the enemy's forces defeated at Amiens might therefore have to be resumed, in case they should once more move forward.

As a matter of fact, news had arrived from several quarters that the French Army of the North had assembled at Arras, that it had been organized and reinforced, and was again giving signs of life. General von Manteuffel accordingly resolved so to distribute his forces as to be able to confront the enemy both on the Seine and on the Somme. The 1st Corps was therefore ordered to take up its position at Rouen; the VIIIth, together with the 3rd Division of Cavalry, at Amiens; of this latter corps the 16th Division of Infantry



GENERAL FAIDHERBE.

should on its march make a movement in the direction of Le Havre, to gain information about the forces there assembled. It soon became clear that the 16th Division of Infantry was not strong enough to make a successful attempt at Le Havre, which was strongly fortified; it therefore marched on to the port of Dieppe, occupied it and thence proceeded along the coast to Amiens. The 15th Division had already previously started thither, and on the 16th of December it reached the neighbourhood of Breteuil and Marseille.

Meanwhile on the 3rd of December General Faidherbe had assumed the Chief Command of the French Army of the North.

Louis Faidherbe was born in Lille in 1818 and belonged to the engineers. He had served principally in the French colonies, mostly in Algiers, where he had repeatedly distinguished himself in the contests against the Cabyles. In 1854 he was appointed Governor of Senegambia, where he rendered valuable service by extending

the territory of the colony. In 1865 he was appointed to the Command of the Sub-division of Bona in Algiers; in the spring of 1870 he became General of Division and Commander of the Division in Constantine. For his appointment to the Chief Command of the Army of the North in 1870 he was indebted to his compatriot and school-fellow M. Testelin.

Faidherbe was beyond dispute one of the best Generals of the French Republican Armies. His tenacious energy and perseverance, his unshaken constancy and calmness unconsciously affected his troops, and their shortcomings in military training and discipline he strove to make good by rigorously enforcing martial law. He certainly was not always successful in his strategic plans; he never could quite shake off his Algerian traditions. He worked on a small scale; he was an excellent well-meaning soldier, but no match for his German antagonists, such men as Manteuffel and Göben.

Meanwhile the reinforcement of the Army of the North had made considerable progress. By the middle of December it had risen to 56 Battalions,¹ 7 Squadrons and 13 Batteries, altogether about 40,000 men, forming two Army Corps; viz., the XXIIIrd Corps, commanded by General Paulze d'Ivoy, and the XXIIInd by General Lecointe.

Rouen having been taken by the Germans and the important port of Le Havre being threatened by them, Faidherbe advanced upon Ham on the Upper Somme, and upon La Fère, thus against the lines of communication of the First Army, with the intention of compelling the Germans to abandon their attack upon Le Havre and to turn against him. In this, as we know, he gained his point: General von Manteuffel despatched the whole of his VIIIth Corps to protect his communications. General Faidherbe declined to advance further to the south, but again moved from Ham down the Somme and marched on the left bank of the river towards Amiens, to recover possession of that important point.

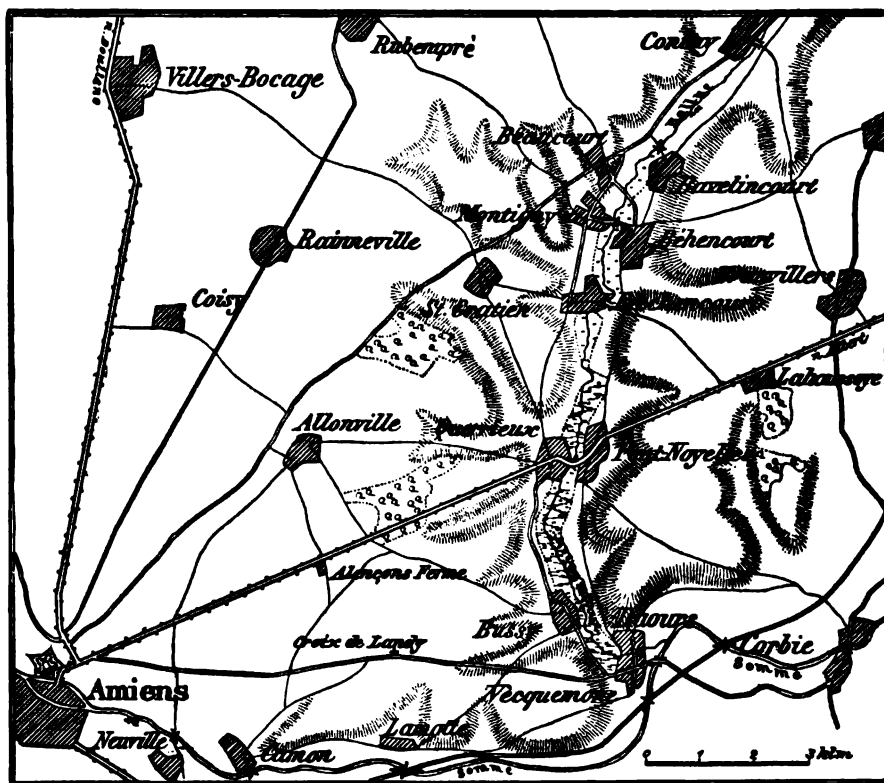
On receipt of this report, the Commander of Amiens, General von der Gröben, evacuated the city on the 15th of December, only keeping the citadel garrisoned; he then marched to Ailly on the Noye to join the 15th Division. General Faidherbe, however, did not enter Amiens, as he had been informed of the approach of the VIIIth Corps and considered a position south of the city with the Somme in his rear far from advantageous. He therefore withdrew to the right bank of the river and posted his Army behind the River Hallue, fronting west. That wing of his which lay towards the enemy was protected by the swamps of the valley of the Somme.

General von Manteuffel being informed on the 16th of December at Rouen that Amiens had been evacuated, immediately ordered the place to be re-occupied, and himself hastened with utmost speed to join the VIIIth Corps. Arriving on the 20th, he found that General von Göben had already assembled the Corps in and south of Amiens and was in touch with the enemy. Within a few days the German Commander-in-Chief would be able to dispose also of the 3rd Division of the Reserve, under General von Senden,² which was expected to arrive at St. Quentin on the 24th, and of a combined Cavalry Brigade (Hussars of the Guards and 2nd Uhlans of the

¹ Inclusive of 17 Battalions of the Line and Marines, the rest being Gardes Mobiles and National Guards.

² It must be remembered that the Infantry of this Division consisted only of one Brigade of the Line (19th and 81st Regiments).

Guards) under Prince Albrecht (the son), stationed at Beauvais; moreover, the General had ordered up by train from Rouen six battalions of the 1st Division.¹ Thus reinforced he felt himself sufficiently strong to meet the enemy. Faithful to the practice observed all along in this present war, he resolved to engage the enemy even with inferior numbers; indeed he gave orders for the attack on the 23rd of December without waiting for the arrival of the 3rd Division of the Reserves. As



BATTLE-FIELD AT THE HALLUE.

(Scale: about 2 English miles to 1 inch.)

General Faidherbe for his part was also resolved to accept battle on the Hallue, Christmastide was destined to witness a decisive event here.

THE BATTLE AT THE HALLUE ON THE 23RD AND 24TH OF DECEMBER.

The 23rd of December.

The French position on the Hallue extended from Bavelincourt to Vèquemont, being a distance of nearly six English miles. The left bank of the little river being higher than the right bank, offered a considerable advantage to the French Army in

¹ Of these the 3rd Regiment of Grenadiers arrived in Amiens as early as the 22nd and the rest in the course of the 23rd.

opposing the expected advance of the Prussians. The valley is pretty deep and harbours a number of large villages strongly built. The River Hallue is about 5 ft. deep and 3 yards broad, and accordingly can only be crossed by artificial means, and its banks are mostly swampy. The position of the French may therefore be considered as having been well chosen for defence, and, moreover, it was strengthened by earth-works, intrenched batteries and shelter-trenches and armed with a great number of heavy marine guns. On the right wing the 1st Division (Derroja) of the XXIIInd Corps occupied the ground from Bavelincourt as far as south of Frechencourt; at its left it was joined to the 2nd Division (Du Bessol) holding Querrieux, Pont Noyelles and Bussy. The 1st Division (Moulac) of the XXIIIrd Corps was posted at Daours and Vèquemont having a reserve at Corbie; Robin's Division at Franvillers formed a General Reserve.

These French forces amounted to 40,000 men and were attacked on the 23rd of December by about 22,500 Germans. The day was sunny and clear, but it was freezing hard, and a thin sheet of snow covered the ground. General von Manteuffel ordered the right wing of the VIIIth Corps (the 15th Division) to take possession of the valley of the River Hallue and to keep the enemy engaged in front, whilst the left wing, viz., the 16th Division, with three regiments of the 3rd Cavalry Division, advancing along the roads to Rubempré and Villers Bocage should endeavour to out-flank the enemy's right wing; the Corps Artillery was distributed between the two Divisions. The remaining troops the Commander-in-Chief wished to keep as a reserve, to be led by him in person and brought into action according to circumstances; for this purpose the 3rd Regiment of Grenadiers, arrived from Rouen, was to hold itself by 10 o'clock in readiness at Lamotte, and the 3rd Brigade of Infantry at 11 o'clock at Alençons-Ferme.

This plan would no doubt have inflicted a disastrous defeat on the enemy, but several circumstances prevented its execution in the intended manner. For the 16th Division, so far from outflanking the right wing of the French, encountered their front, and the German troops exhausted their strength in a bloody contest in the stoutly defended villages of the Hallue, without capturing the main position of the enemy on the heights behind.

THE 15TH DIVISION.

The 15th Division, which during the night had been posted on the left bank of the Somme, between Villers-Bretonneux and Amiens, crossed the river early in the morning at Neuville and Camon, and moved towards the north into the neighbourhood of Allonville, whence they started at 9.30 on their march to the line of the Hallue. The 29th Brigade led, and the 30th followed in rear and somewhat to the left. The woodlands west and north-west of Querrieux were found to be unoccupied by the enemy, who, however, directed upon the advancing Prussians a heavy shell-fire from the heights beyond the Hallue. The artillery of the 15th Division too now moved into position at Alençons-Ferme and replied to the iron morning-greeting of the enemy. At noon the 3rd battalion of the 33rd and the 2nd battalion of the 65th Regiments attacked the village of Querrieux, which covered the main passage over the Hallue, and was held by a strong force of the French. At the first



FRENCH MARINE.

onset the 33rd Regiment took the place and drove the enemy back to Pont-Noyelles. This place was also taken by the pursuing 65th Regiment after a short defence, and then occupied also by the 2nd battalion of the 33rd and the fusiliers of 65th Regiment; but now these brave assailants were met by so fierce a fire of artillery and musketry that their advance was arrested and they had to content themselves with retaining the ground gained.

At about the same time that these events were in progress the 1st battalion of the 65th Regiment advanced upon Bussy, which, being held only by a battalion of French chasseurs, was taken without any serious loss, and the enemy was driven beyond the swamps of the Hallue. Subsequently two companies were detached from here and sent to Vèquemont, where a hot contest was meanwhile being waged.

The 1st battalion of the 33rd Regiment had been sent with a squadron of King's Hussars through Croix-de-Landy to cover the right flank of the 29th Brigade; being too weak to attack Vèquemont, which was held by a strong force of the enemy, it took up an observing position west of the place. Up to 10 o'clock the 8th Battalion of Jägers had held the passage of the Somme at Lamotte, but this force joining the 1st battalion of the 33rd at noon, the attempt upon Vèquemont could at last be ventured upon. With a mighty rush fusiliers and Jägers press into the place, but encounter a surprisingly tenacious resistance from a regiment of Marine Fusiliers, not Gardes Mobiles as they had been led to expect. And now there ensued an embittered hand-to-hand fight; every house, every farm had to be separately taken, and again and again the French endeavour to reconquer the ground lost. Thus the struggle sways to and fro till at last the Germans are reinforced. At first two companies of the 1st battalion of the 65th Regiment hurry up from Bussy, but General von Manteuffel had also ordered up from the Reserve at Lamotte, a battalion of the 3rd Regiment of Grenadiers and a battery. With the help of these fresh troops the Germans at last succeed in driving the enemy out of Vèquemont and beyond the Hallue, and now only Daours is for a while left in the possession of the French.

Meanwhile four battalions of the 29th Brigade had held their own at Pont-Noyelles against a fierce assault of the enemy. At half-past three Lieutenant-Colonel von Henning, the Commander of the 33rd, ordered five companies of his regiment to storm the heights held by the French. With a powerful rush the fusiliers gain the heights, hurl themselves upon the surprised gunners of a battery, and capture two guns. A resolute counter-attack of the enemy with superior forces compels them,

after a brave hand-to-hand resistance, to abandon the advantages they had gained, but Pont-Noyelles they retain.

This bold attack of the East Prussians was made on the assumption that the enemy was with his main forces engaged further north, General von Kummer having already, at 1.30, sent the 30th Brigade, posted behind Querrieux, against the line of the Hallue above Pont-Noyelles. When the 28th Regiment turned aside north of Querrieux to seize upon Frechencourt, it was assailed by so fierce a fire in its flank that it had to wheel round and make front against it. But in rear of the 28th the 68th Regiment marched forward against Frechencourt, took the village at the double and kept it in the teeth of the assault of several French battalions; nevertheless all attempts to dislodge the enemy from the strongly occupied heights failed also in this place.

THE 16TH DIVISION.

Whilst the 15th Division had, amidst fierce struggles, driven back the French by 4 o'clock to the eastern edge of the valley of the Hallue, the 16th Division, accompanied and covered by the 3rd Division of Cavalry, had advanced in two columns by the roads leading northwards from Amiens, and arrived at 1 o'clock at Rubempré and in the region north-east of Villers-Bocage. To fetch a wider sweep to the north did not seem advisable considering the shortness of the winter-day, and accordingly Lieutenant-General von Barnekow, the Commander of the Division, ordered the 32nd Brigade to march upon Beaucourt and the 31st upon St. Gratien, and at 3 o'clock they arrived at their respective places of destination. There could consequently no longer be any talk of outflanking the enemy's right wing, which extended, as we know, as far as Bavelincourt. As a matter of fact, the 31st Brigade, which advanced from St. Gratien to Montigny, encountered the enemy north-west of Frechencourt. The 1st battalion and the battalion of fusiliers of the 29th Regiment did indeed succeed in throwing him back upon Béhencourt, but were unable at once to pursue him beyond the Hallue, the bridges having been destroyed. Only when, spite of the hot fire of the French, they succeeded in constructing means of crossing, also Béhencourt was taken by assault, by the 29th Regiment and parts of the 32nd Brigade. The advanced guard of the same brigade, namely the 1st battalion and the battalion of fusiliers of the 70th Regiment, had also marched upon Montigny, posted themselves there on the right bank of the river and afterwards taken part in the fight of the 29th Regiment against Béhencourt. The 2nd battalion of the 70th Regiment had meanwhile after a short engagement swept Beaucourt of the enemy and had likewise forced an entry into Bavelincourt. But the French artillery fire from the heights proved so effective, that on this wing also no decisive result was gained.

The short winter-day drew to an end. It is true the darkness was lit up far and wide by the burning villages along the Hallue, but this very brightness made of the Prussian troops in the valley excellent targets for the French gunners on the heights, who themselves were hidden in darkness. All the Germans could do was to keep possession of the places they had taken.

ASSAULTS OF THE FRENCH TO RECONQUER THE LINE OF THE HALLUE.

It was already dark when the enemy all along the line undertook to reconquer the ground lost. Soon after 4 o'clock one of his columns hurled itself from the

direction of Contay upon Beaucourt, but while still north of the place they were repulsed by the Prussian artillery. Somewhat later a second attack was made upon Beaucourt, but this was defeated in its turn by the fire of the 40th Regiment of fusiliers. At the same time another French column gained temporary possession of Bavelincourt, but being attacked by the battalion of fusiliers of the 70th Regiment, which was halted for the night north of Béhencourt, it was compelled to beat a speedy retreat. Still more fiercely the battle raged at Pont-Noyelles, where, taking advantage of the darkness, heavy masses of the French advanced against the eastern edge of the village, which was held by 33rd and 65th Regiments. The defenders allowed the storming columns to advance within 50 paces and then received them with a rapid fire. Taken by surprise and greatly shaken they fall back in wild flight, but General Lecoq, their Commander, stops them and leads them on again for a second attack. This time they succeed in entering the village, the Prussians having spent nearly all their ammunition and being compelled to encounter the enemy with cold iron. Once more a hand-to-hand fight ensues; fresh battalions of the French repeatedly rush in, but are repulsed after a short struggle with butt-end, bayonet and side-arms; by 7 o'clock the attack is finally defeated. Two battalions of the 4th Regiment of Grenadiers, sent up by General von Manteuffel from the Reserve at Alençon-Ferme, to support the hard-pressed defenders of Pont-Noyelles, find on arrival the work done and the contest finished. Towards Bussy the enemy had only despatched small parties; but, on the other hand, French chasseurs and Gardes Mobiles of Payen's Brigade forced their way from Daours, over the Hallue-bridge, into Vèquemont, whence they could not be driven out again without a protracted struggle. The Prussian troops pursued them to the left bank, overthrew also some marine fusiliers sent against them, and thus late in the evening gained possession also of Daours.

At 7 o'clock firing ceased along the whole line. Only the flames of the villages cast their lurid light over the snow-covered battle-field, where friend and foe made ready to pass the bitterly cold December night; but whilst the Germans found some shelter and repose in the conquered villages, on the French side only Derroja's Division and Lagrange's Brigade of Moulac's Division got under cover, the rest had to bivouac in the open without fire and with insufficient nourishment, in a temperature of 14° F. below freezing. The Prussian outposts were placed along the Hallue, on the right bank and at the points of exit from the villages. The French outpost line extended close to their front, along the edge of the height on the left bank.

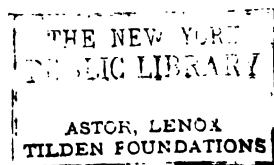
The 24th of December.

At break of day the French at once returned into the positions they had abandoned the evening before, and opened fire upon the valley of the Hallue; nay, later they even repeatedly advanced to the attack, in dense swarms of skirmishers, mostly on their right wing, but without energy or success. Early in the morning the Prussian troops had made ready for an obstinate defence of the captured places; they were now supplied with ammunition, and had formed good strong reserves, for the 15th Division between Bussy and Querrieux, and for the 16th west of Montigny. The general reserve of the Army again stood ready at Alençon-Ferme at the disposal of the Commander-in-Chief, and on the same spot Prince Albrecht also stood in readiness with the Brigade of Cavalry of the Guards, which had meanwhile arrived.



NOCTURNAL COMBAT AT PONT-NOVELLES ON THE 23RD OF DECEMBER, 1870.

[face p. 346.



Whether on the morning of the 24th of December a renewal of the Prussian attack would have been successful must at least be considered very doubtful, for the French, though shaken, were by no means defeated; in any case the attempt would have cost very dear. General von Manteuffel therefore waited to see whether the enemy, whom he thought incapable of holding out long, would not quit the field of his own accord, in view of the improbability of his being able to reconquer the ground lost. And in fact from 2 o'clock some considerable French columns were observed on the march, but the purport of these movements was at first not very clear. At last at three o'clock it was clearly noticed on the right wing that the front ranks were steadily diminishing and moving off towards the north.

The anticipations of the German Commander-in-Chief turned out to be correct. Considering the state of his troops, who had not yet acquired the needful steadiness, General Faidherbe abandoned all intention of prolonging resistance any further, and resolved to lead his army back into positions within the range of the protecting fortresses. In the afternoon the retreat commenced, and continued during the night, between the 24th and 25th of December, with such speed that at dawn the Germans had lost sight of the French altogether. The losses of the Prussians on the 23rd and 24th of December amounted to 45 officers and 881 rank and file killed and wounded; of the French to more than 1000 men killed and wounded, and nearly 1300 prisoners.

The battle on the Hallue presents somewhat the same features as that of Amiens on the 27th of November. Again the German Commander-in-Chief was insufficiently informed about the strength and position of the French, and attacked with inadequate forces. If the French Army of the North was to be decisively defeated, then *all* the available forces had to be brought into action. The severance of the First Army into two groups at Amiens and at Rouen was certainly very disadvantageous, but just this very inconvenience would have been obviated if at least in one quarter the enemy had been completely defeated. A complete or temporary evacuation of Rouen would not have been a decided disadvantage. Let the French raise at first a shout of triumph—if after the total defeat of Faidherbe the conquerors had once more appeared before the Capital of Normandy, what has happened so often in this war would again have occurred; the dejection would have been all the deeper because of the preceding exultation.

The contests on the Hallue on the 23rd and 24th December must be numbered amongst the indecisive battles, both armies having remained on the field. True the French lost all the villages in front of their main position and vainly strove to reconquer them, yet on the other hand the Germans failed in all their attempts to take the heights. That this could not but be so is sufficiently accounted for by the superiority of the French in numbers and by the extraordinary strength of their positions; but all this does not alter the fact that the French quitted the field of their own accord. How little their strength was broken was proved shortly afterwards, when they even resumed the offensive.

ON THE SOMME UP TO THE 2ND OF JANUARY, 1871.

When it was clear that the French had evacuated the line of the Hallue General von Manteuffel commanded on the 25th of December the VIIIth Corps to pursue the enemy. The 15th Division marched on that day as far as Albert, and on its left,

on a level with it, the 16th, with the detachment of the 3rd Division of Cavalry added to it, arrived at Hédauville, but they could not even discover whether the main forces of the enemy had retreated to Arras or Cambrai. The advance was continued on the 26th of December on a broad front. The 15th Division reached Bapaume, the 31st Brigade of the 16th and the 3rd Division of Cavalry reached Bucquoy, and the 32nd Achiet-le-Grand; the Brigade of Cavalry of the Guards went to Sailly-Saillisel. Several indications led to the conclusion that the enemy had moved to Cambrai, but,



PRINCE ALBRECHT OF PRUSSIA (SON).

as a matter of fact, General Faidherbe had led his army to Arras, given it a short rest, and posted it behind the River Scarpe.

General von Manteuffel now determined with the 3rd Brigade of Infantry and with the 3rd Division of the Reserve, which had meanwhile come up, to lay siege to Péronne, this fortress being of great importance for the retention of the line of the Somme; and the VIIIth Corps was posted at Bapaume to cover the besieging troops. Of this Corps the 31st Brigade also was soon afterwards called up to Péronne and the 44th Regiment of Infantry detached from the 3rd Brigade and sent by train to Rouen. In consequence of this there occurred further displacements in the positions of the VIIIth Army Corps. On the 1st of January, 1871, the forces of the First Army were distributed along the Somme as follows:

1. Outside Péronne: 31st Brigade of Infantry (5 Batt.); 3rd Division of Reserve (5 Batt., 8 Squad., 3 Batt.).

2. To cover the siege of Péronne: 29th Brigade of Infantry (5 Batt., 1 Squad., 2 Batt.) at Bertincourt and Sailly-Saillisel; 30th Brigade of Infantry (5 Batt., 2 Squad., 2 Batt.) at Bapaume; 32nd Brigade of Infantry (4 Batt., 4 Squad., 2 Batt.) between Achiet-le-Grand and Bucquoy. 3rd Division of Cavalry (10½ Squad., 1 Battalion of the 69th Regiment, 1 Battery) at Bienvillers. Brigade of Cavalry of the Guards (7 Squad., 3rd Battn. of the 33rd Regiment, 1 Batt.) at Fins. 8th Battalion of Jägers and 2 Batteries at Combles, where were also the Head-Quarters of the Officer Commanding the VIIIth Army Corps.

3. In Amiens: 4th Regiment of Grenadiers, 1 Battalion of the 70th Regiment, 3 Squadrons, 2 Batteries.

4. At Picquigny (north-west of Amiens) for observation towards Abbeville: 1 Battalion of the 70th Regiment, 4 Squadrons of the 7th Regiment of Uhlans.

And besides these, the 12th (Royal Saxon) Division of Cavalry was posted at Le Catalet, north of St. Quentin. As this was soon after ordered off to Guise, General von Göben thought it necessary to strengthen his right, being still under the impression that the enemy was at Cambrai. He therefore, on the 2nd of January, called from his left wing the 40th Regiment, the 9th Regiment of Hussars, and two batteries to Nurlu and Epéhy to join the Brigade of the Cavalry of the Guards. All the troops here assembled were placed under the Command of Prince Albrecht, who now sent the 3rd battalion of the 33rd Regiment back to its Brigade. The only battalion of the 32nd Brigade of Infantry still left at Achiet-le-Grand, a batt. of the 70th Reg., now marched off to Amiens to reinforce the garrison of that place, so that the hitherto left wing of the VIIIth Corps—the 16th Division—wholly disappeared.

On the 31st of December General von Manteuffel personally went to Rouen, as the enemy in that quarter, again becoming active, made his presence desirable. The command at the Somme he intrusted to General von Göben. Meanwhile General Faidherbe had worked hard to restore the efficiency of his army. And although he had not yet fully succeeded in this task by the end of December, yet the investment of Péronne induced him to attack the VIIIth Corps in order to relieve the fortress. He justly calculated that the fall of Péronne would give the Germans command of the line of the Somme and therefore supply them with an excellent line of defence for covering the siege of Paris. Thus Péronne, otherwise a place of quite subordinate rank, became important by circumstances. As General Faidherbe could dispose of 40,000 Frenchmen against a German force of barely 15,000 man, his enterprise seemed very hopeful, provided the attack was made by surprise and directed with concentrated force upon a single point of the Prussian line. But he was as ill-informed about the dispositions of his opponents as the Germans were about his. He thought the Prussian left wing at Bucquoy was the strongest, and sent on the 2nd January his best troops, his XXIInd Corps, against it. But we know that on that very 2nd of January the Prussian 32nd Brigade of Infantry had left Bucquoy altogether, in consequence of which his advance at that point was aimless, whilst on the other wing his less efficient troops, his XXIIIrd Corps encountered a fierce and successful resistance.

THE CONTEST AT SAPIGNIES ON THE 2ND OF JANUARY, 1871.

On the morning of the 2nd of January the French Army of the North quitted its position at Arras on the roads leading to Bapaume and Acheux, and surprised the left wing of the 15th Division. At Bienvillers Derroja's Division of the XXIInd Army Corps encountered the 3rd Division of the German Cavalry together with the battalion of the 69th Regiment attached to it, and compelled them to retreat upon Miraumont, but the French only followed them up to Achiet-le-Petit, and Bessol's Division, with which General Faidherbe was present in person, only moved in the afternoon upon Achiet-le-Grand. Here two companies of the 28th Regiment held them in check for 1½ hours, and then withdrew to Avesnes. Bessol's Division also omitted to utilize its advantage, but halted at Bihucourt.

The 1st Division (Payen, previously Moulac,) of the XXIIIrd Corps at 12 o'clock made an outflanking attack upon Behagnies, held by the 1st battalion of the 28th Regiment, and forced them back to Sapiignies, where they were received by the 2nd battalion. Major-General von Strubberg quickly hurried up for their support the 68th Regiment from Bapaume, and these troops, being supported by artillery, succeeded not only in brilliantly repulsing the whole of Payen's Division, but also in recapturing Behagnies. This place the 28th attacked at 2 o'clock, and drove out the enemy, inflicting heavy losses and making numerous prisoners. Payen's Division escaped to Ervillers and thenceforward remained inactive. The 2nd Division (Robin) of the XXIIIrd Corps at first had followed Payen's Division and afterwards turned aside to the east. The battalion of fusiliers of the 28th Regiment and a squadron of King's Hussars were moved forward against it, and deployed on a very broad front on the heights north of Favreuil and Beugnâtre. They thus succeeded in hiding from the enemy the weakness of the Prussian troops, and consequently he did not venture to attack, but passed the night in Mory and Vaulx. In the evening the 68th Regiment held Favreuil and the 28th Sapiignies; the 29th Brigade had been assembled whilst the battle was in progress, and had now one battalion at Frémicourt, one at Beugnâtre and a third at Biefvillers, Grévillers and Avesnes. All the other troops of the 15th Division were concentrated in and around Bapaume.

The contest at Sapiignies on the 2nd of January can only be regarded as a reconnaissance in force by the French. Chance and surprise played a great part in it. Had better troops been faced by inferior opponents, the French, thanks to their superior numbers, might have scored great successes; but by the tenacious resistance of a few Prussian battalions they allowed themselves to be deceived about the weakness of their enemy and advanced hesitatingly. Moreover, General Faidherbe was personally present with the wrong wing, the right, and remained ill-informed about his XXIIIrd Corps till the evening had set in. He believed he had gained a victory, but as a matter of fact he had only forewarned the enemy of his danger and compelled him to concentrate his scattered forces. The 30th Brigade deserves the highest admiration for the tenacity and skill with which it victoriously repulsed a whole Army Corps.

THE BATTLE OF BAPAUME ON JANUARY 3RD, 1871.

General Faidherbe stopped the night at Achiet-le-Grand. His position was in so far unfavourable as his XXIIIrd Corps had to be considered as having been defeated,

but on the other hand the occupation of Achiet-le-Grand and Bihucourt by the French, exposed the 30th Prussian Brigade to the danger of being attacked next day in front and in flank; General von Kummer therefore in the evening withdrew the 28th Regiment from Sapignies to Bapaume, and the French Division Payen occupied the place at night. The contest of the 2nd of January had, however, so severely tried the XXIIIrd Corps, that its Commander advised General Faidherbe to abandon the whole enterprise and retire to Arras, but it was not easy to move Faidherbe from a resolution he had formed; the relief of Péronne appeared to him of sufficient importance to try his fortune once more on the 3rd of January.

He made therefore the following dispositions: Payen's Division of the XXIIIrd Corps was to renew its attack along the high road to Bapaume, Robin's Division to move from Mory and Vaulx to Favreuil, and endeavour to surround the place from the east. Bessol's Division of the XXIIInd Corps was to join the advance of Payen's Division and direct its march from Bihucourt to Biefvillers. On the extreme right wing Derroja's Division to move from Achiet-le-Grand to Grévillers. The whole plan then aimed at a double outflanking of the Germans, the two French wings to meet at Bapaume. Considering his considerable superiority of numbers, General Faidherbe's plan must be considered very feasible.

The country about Bapaume is on the whole undulating; the heights, though inconsiderable, still offer favourable positions for infantry; there are no important valleys and no covered positions in the bottoms that cannot be overlooked. The numerous villages lie near each other and are strongly built. The town of Bapaume was surrounded by old fortifications, which were defective in many places, but still offered considerable advantages for the defence.

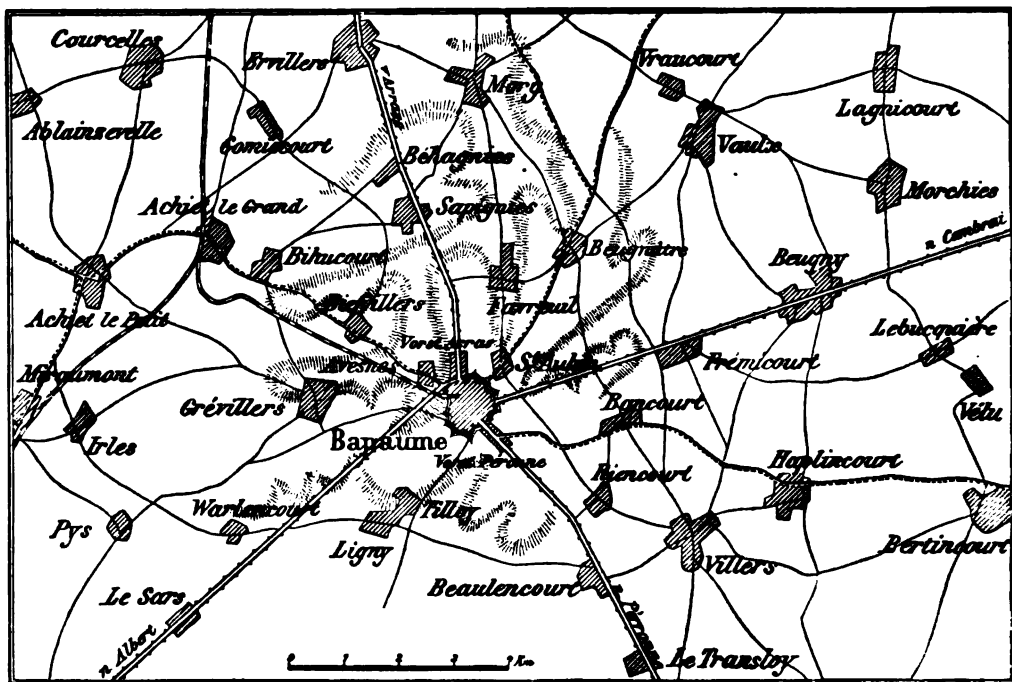
The morning of the 3rd of January was cold and gloomy, and a thin coating of snow covered the hard frozen ground. In the morning General von Kummer assembled the 30th Brigade and the Regiment of Royal Hussars and drew them up in front of Bapaume; five companies of the 68th Regiment remaining in Favreuil. Of the 29th Brigade three battalions were still posted at Frémicourt, Beugnâtre, Avesnes, Biefvillers and Grévillers; the remainder (the 1st battalion 33rd ¹ and the Fusilier Battalion 65th) were posted behind the town and the 8th Battalion of Jägers were ordered up to Le Transloy. The Detachment of Prince Albrecht (consisting at the time of the 40th Regiment of Fusiliers and the Brigade of Cavalry of the Guards with three Batteries) was ordered to hold itself in readiness at Bertincourt and await further orders, and the 3rd Division of Cavalry to advance from Miraumont to outflank the French right. General von Barnekow, who commanded the troops investing Péronne, was also ordered to send forward three battalions and a field-division of artillery to Sailly-Saillisel as a Reserve for the 15th Division, without, however, interrupting the siege.

Early in the morning the enemy drew up his forces before the Prussian front along the line Bihucourt—Sapignies. From Bihucourt Bessol's Division moved upon Biefvillers, with Förster's ² Brigade leading. Here it encountered the 5th company of the 33rd Regiment of Fusiliers, which in presence of this threatened attack was forced to retreat to Avesnes, where it joined the 1st Battalion of its regiment. The

¹ The 3rd Battalion of the 33rd relieved from the Detachment of Prince Albrecht, was still on the march.

² A German name, probably an Alsatian. [*Trs.*]

loss of Biefvillers was a grievous one for the 15th Division, because the Germans at Favreuil were threatened in their rear. When General von Kummer heard of it, he exclaimed: "Biefvillers is the key of our position, the 33rd Regiment is to retake it forthwith." Lieutenant-Colonel von Henning imposed this heavy task on his 1st Battalion, which was assisted by the 5th Company driven out from Biefvillers. Supported by a battery drawn up west of Bapaume, these five companies resolutely advance. By a bold rush they force an entry into Biefvillers and capture the greater part of the place, although it was held by the whole of Förster's Brigade. Soon a fierce bayonet fight from house to house ensues, in which the Prussian companies at first steadily maintain their position; but now, when Aynès' Brigade of Derroja's



BAPAUME.

(About 2 English miles to 1 inch.)

Division, which was advancing upon Grévillers, joins in with a flank attack, the brave but small German force is unable to withstand such a crushing superiority. Bereaved of nearly all their officers and surrounded on all sides, they succeed indeed in cutting their way through with the bayonet and in returning to Avesnes, but it was only fragments that came back. These heroic efforts cost the five companies the loss of 11 officers—only 3 not being *hors de combat*—and 30 per cent of the rank and file.

Bessol's Division contented itself, however, with the retention of Biefvillers; nor did Derroja's Division, of which Pittié's Brigade had meanwhile ejected the 6th Company from Grévillers, issue forth from this place with any large bodies of men; but on the other hand the French lines of skirmishers gradually extended as far as the

road Bapaume—Albert, and the artillery of the XXIInd Corps commanded the road to Arras with an effective fire from their guns.

Whilst Faidherbe's plan of outflanking the Germans was thus successful on their left wing, it failed with his XXIIIrd Corps on their right. Here it had been intended that Payen's Division should engage the enemy in front, whilst Robin's Division should move round the flank. This latter moved from Mory on Beugnâtre, which was defended by the 1st and fusilier battalions of the 65th Regiment and by two mounted batteries. The very first Prussian shells that fell in the midst of the French column put them to flight, and in such disorder and hurry, that for the whole day the division refused to be led against the enemy.

Spite of this German success the position of the 15th Division grew about noon more and more unfavourable. Its right wing was without support and was in great danger of a French advance from Sapignies to Bapaume; its centre suffered under the cross-fire of the enemy's artillery, which surrounded the Prussian troops in a curve extending from east of Sapignies to south of Grévillers, and at the same time the left wing was being more and more encircled by the enemy. Under these circumstances General von Kummer determined to restrict himself to the defence of Bapaume and to await the arrival of the troops on his flanks (the Detachment of Prince Albrecht and the 3rd Division of Cavalry) and of the reinforcements from Péronne. The Prussian artillery till then engaged had greatly suffered and nearly spent all its ammunition; it was accordingly withdrawn behind Bapaume, and Favreuil was evacuated. Only St. Aubin was still held by the Fusilier-Battalion of the 68th Regiment. The rest of the 30th Brigade assembled south of Bapaume on the road to Péronne. In the town itself the 29th Brigade made everything ready for a stout defence, the old ramparts of the town being found very useful.

The French now had gained a firm footing in Avesnes and in the suburb towards Arras and endeavoured, albeit in vain, to take St. Aubin. Shortly after 1 o'clock a brigade of Bessol's Division attacked the northern side of Bapaume, but was so effectively opposed, that it restricted itself to a musketry fire without making any advance. A similar attack made on the western side of the town by Aynès' Brigade of Derroja's Division was equally unsuccessful. General Faidherbe now endeavoured to force the evacuation of the town by enveloping the German left wing still more; for this purpose Pittié's Brigade of Derroja's Division advanced upon Tilloy and Ligny, where it encountered the 8th Battalion of Jägers and two Batteries, which General von Göben had meanwhile called up to reinforce his wing. The first attack of the French failed; their second attack enabled them to take Tilloy, but Ligny still remained in the possession of the Jägers.

Meanwhile the Detachment of Prince Albrecht had also arrived, and at about half-past eleven joined in the conflict on the right wing of the Germans. The 1st battalion of the 40th Regiment supported by two batteries fell upon Favreuil, took it by storm and ejected the French. But as the battalion was here too much isolated and its flanks were threatened, it was after a while withdrawn to the Cambrai road. The Prussian right wing leant upon Frémicourt. The 2nd battalion of the 40th Regiment had meanwhile attacked St. Aubin, which had been evacuated by the Fusiliers of the 68th Regiment. After a hard struggle they succeeded in recapturing the place and in retaining it permanently. On the German right wing the fight had come to an end; the French restricting themselves to maintaining a rather ineffective artillery fire.

It was now the duty of the Prussian Generals to make safe their left wing and to regain possession of Tilloy. Against this place all the batteries near directed their fire, and at the same time fresh forces advanced to the attack. These consisted primarily of a part of the 3rd Division of Cavalry which General Count von der Gröben had left behind at Miraumont when he had been ordered to advance and make an outflanking movement against the enemy's right wing, being 3 Companies of the 69th Regiment, $2\frac{1}{2}$ Squadrons of the 8th Cuirassiers and 4 guns under General von Mirus; the latter seeing no enemy before him at Miraumont, but hearing the heavy firing at Bapaume, had on his own responsibility moved in the afternoon in the direction of the cannonade and arrived at 4 o'clock at Ligny. Soon afterwards there appeared also the 3rd battalion of the 33rd Regiment, which was on its march back from the Detachment of Prince Albrecht to its regiment. As General von Strubberg was at the same time bringing up the 28th Fusilier Battalion, the 1st battalion of the 65th Regiment and two companies of the 68th, there were now in all 21 companies ready for the assault upon Tilloy; the French, however, did not wait for it, but evacuated the village, and shortly afterwards also Avesnes and the suburb towards Arras.

Darkness now setting in, the battle thus terminated also on this side of Bapaume. It now remains to report the events on the 3rd of January at the extreme points of both wings.

Early in the morning General Count von der Gröben had marched with the 7th Cavalry Brigade (5th and 14th Uhlans) with two guns against Bucquoy, and encountering the enemy's infantry had turned aside via Ablainzeville against Achiet-le-Grand; but here also he found no opportunity to act with effect and therefore went back at dusk to Sailly-aux-Bois (about 12 to 14 English miles west of Bapaume). Making all allowance for the hard frozen ground, which was unfavourable to the movements of large bodies of cavalry, and for the deficient arms of the Uhlans, who were without carbines, still the performance of the 7th Brigade of Cavalry must be characterized as very meagre.

On the other hand, on the extreme right flank of the 15th Division, two squadrons of the Regiment of Hussars of the Guards, part of Prince Albrecht's Brigade, having been sent out to reconnoitre towards the fortress of Cambrai, gave effect to a genuine piece of Hussar's audacity. They noticed a column of the enemy, consisting of several battalions, on the march from Cambrai to Bapaume; they dismounted, occupied a ridge of heights leading right across the main road, and even sent out a line of skirmishers against the French, who halted, and after some hesitation returned to the fortress no doubt in the belief that they had encountered a strong body of infantry.

Derroja's Division passed the night of the 3rd of January at Grevillers, Bessol's Division at Bihucourt and Achiet-le-Grand, Payen's Division at Favreuil and Béhagnies, and Robin's Division at Beugnâtre and Vaulx. The 15th Division of the Germans and the Detachment of General von Mirus passed the night in Bapaume, Tilloy and Ligny, and the Detachment of Prince Albrecht in the villages along the road to Cambrai.

The troops commanded by General von Göben lost on the 2nd and 3rd January, altogether 52 officers and 698 rank and file. The French paid for the occupation of the ground in front of the main position of the Prussians with the loss of 53 officers and 1516 rank and file, besides 550 prisoners.

The battle of Bapaume must be characterized as indecisive in the fullest sense

of the word. Although the tactical advantage was mostly in favour of the French, the Germans were the gainers strategically. Never during the whole campaign had the French Army of the North better prospects of inflicting a defeat upon the Germans than on the day of Bapaume. Their infantry was $3\frac{1}{2}$ times as numerous as that of their enemy, their artillery was about equal, and only in cavalry were they decidedly weaker, though the Germans derived but little advantage from this superiority. Had the Army of the North put forth its whole force against the 15th Division they might have crushed it by sheer weight of numbers; but as a matter of fact a large part of the French never fought at all, and everywhere we meet mere attempts or half-measures, where supreme efforts were indispensable.

Accordingly General Faidherbe had to renounce his plan of compelling the Germans to raise the siege of Péronne. After a two days' battle his troops on the 3rd of January were in such a state as to forbid the thought of renewing the attack on the 4th; the position of the Germans also was far from favourable; their ammunition was well-nigh spent, there were no reserves worth mentioning, and the troops were thoroughly exhausted. Only a staff like that of the German Army would ever have ventured to offer resistance to an enemy three times as numerous as themselves and at the same time to continue the siege of Péronne. The hazardous venture succeeded, because the whole military mechanism worked to perfection in every detail, and because the Commander-in-Chief was confident that under any circumstances the troops would do all that could in any way be expected of soldiers. Thus although the day of Bapaume did not bring the fruition of a complete victory, yet it will always be numbered amongst the glorious achievements of General von Göben and of the 15th Division.

TO THE FALL OF PÉRONNE ON THE 9TH OF JANUARY, 1871.

During the night before the 4th of January the Army of the North began to retreat, falling back upon Boyelles, some 7 to 8 English miles north of Bapaume. Faidherbe, thus voluntarily abandoning all that he had won, converted his tactical victory into a strategic defeat. His proclamations, orders to the army and boastful despatches are all unavailing to hide this fact.

General von Göben had not expected that his enemy would retreat, but was preparing for a renewal of the attack on the morrow, the 4th of January, but as he did not feel himself strong enough to meet it at Bapaume, he determined to withdraw the bulk of his troops behind the Somme, even at the risk of having to interrupt the investment of Péronne. But during the night the Prussian scouts announced that the enemy was marching away in the direction of Arras. Although thereby his incapacity for continuing the struggle was openly confessed, still General von Göben adhered to the resolve he had taken, being determined to give to his troops a period of repose and security from danger. He ordered the 15th Division to occupy quarters at Bray on the left bank of the Somme, but Prince Albrecht's troops were retained on the right bank and quartered in the district Roisel—Épéhy—Nurlu. The 3rd Division of Cavalry also remained in front of the enemy, and occupied quarters at Albert; it followed the retreating Army of the North on Jan. 5th beyond Bapaume. The 12th (Royal Saxon) Cavalry Division had about this time reached Guise,



east of St. Quentin, having repeatedly encountered troops of a newly formed French brigade commanded by Colonel Isnard. At St. Quentin the division again joined the right wing of the VIIIth Corps.

Reports having come in, that the enemy had again halted, General von Göben thought himself justified in expecting a speedy resumption of his march upon Péronne. Being unable in his position behind the Somme to prevent this, he determined to give his troops a day's rest and supply them with fresh ammunition, then to lead them back

again across the Somme and to occupy in the line Combles—Miraumont a position flanking the road Arras—Bapaume—Péronne. His intention was to compel the enemy before marching upon Péronne to attack the Germans at a disadvantage, viz., with his line of retreat to a flank. Should the enemy venture, however, to march past the German position, then General von Göben was resolved to attack him in the flank while on the march.

The occupation of this flanking position was, however, not carried out. The first steps had already been taken on the 6th of January, when reports came in, which led to the conclusion that the enemy intended to march upon Amiens and not upon Péronne. Under these circumstances the position Combles—Miraumont would have been disadvantageous and useless, as the enemy's march upon Amiens did not imperil the siege of Péronne. The forward movement of the 15th Division was therefore arrested and a generally expectant attitude was assumed. On the evening of the 7th of January the 29th Brigade was at Albert, the 30th at Bray, the Corps Artillery still south of the Somme and the 3rd Cavalry Division at Bapaume. Of the 3rd Division

of the Reserve, which was now put under Prince Albrecht, its former Commander, General von Senden, having been appointed to the command of the 14th Division of Infantry, only Von Strantz's Reserve Cavalry Brigade remained at Péronne; the Division itself was posted south of the Somme and west of Péronne at Herbécourt, so as to be able quickly to reach Amiens, should necessity require it. The Brigade of Cavalry of the Guards went to Sailly-Saillisel and to Combles.

The report that the Army of the North was on the march to Amiens soon turned out to have been mistaken, General Faidherbe having all along intended to advance upon Péronne; but believing Bapaume strongly occupied, he determined to make a longer détour eastwards, via Bertincourt. On the 7th of January he had reached Hamelin-court and the region to the east of it, but—ostensibly owing to the news that the siege of Péronne had been raised—he halted and gave his troops a few days' rest.

The Prussian troops also remained on the 8th and 9th of January inactive in their positions. In accordance with orders from Head-Quarters they were reinforced between the 7th and 11th of January by six battalions and batteries, so that on the 11th there stood assembled at Amiens 9 battalions of the 1st Corps (the 3rd Infantry Brigade and the Crown Prince's Grenadier Regiment), all of which were placed under the command of Major-General von Memerty, and were in consequence designated as "Memerty's Detachment."

On the 9th of January an event occurred which had been anxiously expected, viz., the capitulation of Péronne. The investment of this fortress had up to then exercised a twofold and very pernicious influence upon the measures of the First Army. It held the army fast at a single point and imprinted on it a character of immobility, which in face of the superior numbers of the enemy was a thing specially to be avoided, and in addition it weakened the German forces by their necessary separation. Ever since the beginning of the campaign in Picardy Péronne had disturbed the German communications and favoured the measures of the enemy; accordingly this fortress had always to be taken into account and required constant observation. Not till the Germans got possession of it could they regard themselves as undisputed masters of the line of the Somme. At first determined measures against Péronne had been prevented by the march of the First Army to Rouen, and afterwards by the necessary concentration of all the forces against Faidherbe. After the battle on the Hallue, General von Manteuffel determined to make himself master of that troublesome place. On the 26th and 27th of December Péronne was invested by the 3rd Division of the Reserve and the 3rd Brigade of Infantry; the 44th Regiment of the latter, however, returned, as we know, to Rouen in the beginning of January, and its place was taken by the 31st Brigade. The fortifications of Péronne were very antiquated and unable to withstand modern siege-artillery. The garrison consisted of 3514 men, inclusive of two Companies of the Line; the rest being National Guards and Gardes Mobiles. It was armed with 48 guns.

As the Germans did not possess a park of siege-artillery, they made use of the French matériel found in La Fère and in the citadel of Amiens. Until these arrived before the fortress (in the beginning of January) the Germans carried on the bombardment with field-artillery, but exercising some economy in the use of their ammunition. On the 28th of December 58 German field-guns began to bombard the place with shells, and speedily great fires broke out in the town; still it did not surrender.

On the 30th the first siege-guns arrived from Amiens; on the 1st of January, 1871, the construction of the battery was begun, and on the next day it opened fire. The siege-artillery from La Fère was not brought up till the 6th of January, and was to join in the bombardment on the 9th, but on that very day Péronne capitulated, and on the 10th General von Barnekow entered with two battalions of the 40th Regiment. The siege cost the Germans 60 killed and wounded; the French lost 63 men and about an equal number of inhabitants.

THE EVENTS ON THE LOWER SEINE UP TO THE 6TH OF JANUARY, 1871.



TOWER OF THE MAID OF ORLEANS, ROUEN.

We must now for a time leave the German troops on the Somme and direct our attention to those on the Lower Seine, where the French opposed to the 1st Corps¹ had remained somewhat inactive up to the end of December. The 1st Infantry Division was posted on the left bank of the Seine, south of Rouen, and the rest of the corps in and round the city.

The country to the west as far as the River Rille was found clear of the French, but, *per contra*, considerable forces of theirs appeared to be assembling behind Brionne; these the 1st Brigade of Infantry undertook to observe. When next, at the end of December, the 2nd Brigade of Infantry was sent to Amiens, General von Benthheim withdrew the 1st Brigade to Grand-Couronne and La Roquette by the curve of the Seine south of Rouen. The enemy followed them as far as Bourgtheroulde and La Bouille.

The German parties scouring the country on the right bank of the Seine as far as the neighbourhood of Le Havre, had at first only encountered small forces of the enemy. At last, on the 23rd of December, a large reconnoitring party advancing towards Bolbec, encountered a serious resistance; moreover, French war-steamers steamed several times up the Seine as far as Duclair, so that the Germans had to sink ships in the river and render it unfit for navigation.

The enemy reappearing on both banks of the Seine, induced General von Manteuffel on the 25th of December, after the battle on the Hallue, to send back the 2nd Infantry Brigade from Amiens to Rouen. On the 30th and 31st slight skirmishes took place south of the city with French troops, who endeavoured to prevent the Germans from destroying the railway-bridge at Elbeuf; at most points they were

¹ This Corps was of course short of the 3rd Infantry Brigade.

driven away, but in some places they offered a stout resistance. All this shewed that the enemy had at his disposal considerable forces, which would have to be guarded against.

On the 31st of December General von Manteuffel had gone by train to Rouen, and after personal inspection of the state of affairs had ordered, on January 1st, 1871, the 44th Regiment to come up from Amiens.¹ After their arrival General von Bentheim took measures by making a powerful attack, on the 4th of January, to gain freedom of action on the left bank of the Seine.

On the chord of the curve of the river, on the line Elbeuf—La Bouille, the French General Roye was posted with 11 battalions of Gardes Mobiles and National Guards (about 10,000 men) and 16 guns. The ground within the curve of the river is filled with a densely wooded ridge of heights, only leaving open in the north a level tract of land about 800 yards broad. Thereby the French troops were compelled to divide into two groups; a southern one at Elbeuf and Orival, consisting of 5 battalions and 4 guns, and a northern at Moulineaux, La Bouille and its rear, consisting of 4 battalions and 6 guns. The remaining troops formed the reserve and were posted at Bourgtheroulde and Bourgachard.

Early on the morning of the 4th of January, 1871, the temperature being 18° F. of frost, the Germans made a surprise attack on these positions while it was still dark. The plan had been kept quite secret, the troops only receiving their orders during the night. Under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel von Hüllessem, six companies advanced against Moulineaux by the road through Grand-Couronne, and further south 2½ battalions marched through the wood against the ruins of the castle of Robert-le-Diable. They were followed in the valley by two more battalions, a squadron and two batteries, commanded by Colonel von Legat, and at their rear at a somewhat greater distance marched four battalions, one squadron and two batteries, commanded by Colonel von Busse. Moreover there remained at Grande-Couronne 2½ battalions ready to support the attack by an advance upon La Londe.

The column under Lieutenant-Colonel von Hüllessem, which was marching through the wood, surprised the enemy's outposts, when it was still moonlight, and drove them to Robert-le-Diable. Here a more serious resistance was encountered, but five Prussian Companies stormed the conical hill of the castle and repulsed the French after a sharp hand-to-hand fight. A part of the defenders escaped into the woods, the rest were made prisoners. The column advancing along the highway met but little resistance at Moulineaux; only at Maison-Brulée a considerable musketry-contest ensued, which, however, was decided in favour of the Prussians by the arrival of Colonel von Legat. The enemy was driven back to Bourgachard, leaving two guns in the hands of the Germans.

Whilst Colonel von Legat pursued the enemy to Bourgachard, Lieutenant-Colonel von Hüllessem turned to La Londe, and Colonel von Busse, who had meanwhile arrived with his column, moved upon Bourgtheroulde. On all these three points the enemy offered but a feeble resistance. From Bourgachard he was pursued as far as Rougemontier, and from Bourgtheroulde in the direction of Brionne. A small engagement was also fought at Orival by the detachment sent out from Grand-Couronne.

¹ General von Manteuffel soon afterwards returned to Amiens.

The enemy's right wing posted at Elbeuf withdrew hastily during the night and thus escaped from the dangerous situation created by the retreat of his left wing. On the 5th of January the Prussian scouting parties found the country swept of the enemy as far as the neighbourhood of the River Rille.

The contests of the 4th of January cost the Germans 5 officers and 167 rank and file in killed and wounded; the French lost about an equal number and more than 300 prisoners besides. Bourgachard, Bourgheroulde and Elbeuf were occupied by Prussian troops, with reserves at Grand-Couronne; all the rest returned to Rouen.

The defeat of General Roye caused the other French forces on the right bank of the Seine to arrest their march upon Rouen and to return to the neighbourhood of Le Havre. From now forward to the end of the campaign the 1st Corps was not again molested by any attempts of the enemy.

THE VIIITH CORPS BEHIND THE SOMME.

The fall of Péronne coincided with another event—a change in the Chief Command. On the 8th of January General von Manteuffel was called away to undertake the Chief Command of the newly-formed Army of the South, and General von Göben was entrusted with the Command of the First Army. A better selection the King could not have made; Göben was the right man for this responsible post.

Augustus von Göben was born in Hanover on the 10th of December, 1816. He came from a noble family of ancient descent, but in reduced circumstances. The vivacious boy early gave evidence of an ardent admiration for Prussia; his highest ambition was to become a Prussian officer, and to gain this end he overcame all difficulties.

Von Göben began his career in 1833 in the 24th Regiment of Foot, and was appointed officer in 1835. He did not long remain satisfied with service in time of peace, which at that time offered little attraction to a gifted and ambitious officer; he desired to go to Spain to take part in the Carlist War. He was allowed to retire in 1836, and in the month of May of that year he entered the ranks of the Carlists; in July he was severely wounded and made prisoner. After 8 months' detention he succeeded in making his escape, but in January 1838 he had again the misfortune to be wounded and made prisoner. Now he had to pass through troublous days; twice he had to cast lots for his life, because a number of Carlist officers in prison had to be shot. At last, in 1839, he was exchanged, and he resumed his military life. At the termination of the Carlist War in 1840, he was dismissed and, stripped of all means, he had to work his way on foot through France, like a beggar. He returned with the rank of a Carlist Lieutenant-Colonel, and was thankful to be re-admitted in 1842 into the Prussian Army, into the 8th Regiment (Body-Guard) with the rank of Second Lieutenant.

Soon his conspicuous military talent secured him a post in the Great General Staff, where in 1845 he was promoted to a captaincy. In 1848 he was transferred to the General Staff of the IVth Corps, the Chief of which staff was then Major von Moltke.

From that time dates the profound mutual esteem of these two men, which has always remained undisturbed.

He took part in the campaign in Baden in 1849, on the staff of the Commander of

the Prussian Field Army, Prince, afterwards King, William of Prussia, who, like Moltke, also took notice and thought highly of him. Having then commanded a company for some time, he was, in 1850, promoted, returning with the rank of Major to the General Staff, where he remained till, in 1861, he became Major-General and Chief of the 26th Brigade of Infantry, which he commanded during the campaign of 1864 in Denmark. The fight at Rackebüll and the passage to the island of Alsen gave him the opportunity to shew his fitness for command. Still more was this the case in 1866, when he commanded the 13th Division of the Army of the Maine with the rank of Lieutenant-General. The successes at Dermbach, Kissingen, Aschaffenburg and Tauberbischofsheim were principally due to his skill. On the mobilisation of 1870 Von Göben was placed in command of the VIIIth Corps, at the head of which he earned new laurels in the battles of Spicheren and Gravelotte.

Göben was a man rich in all the qualifications needful to a leader of armies. He possessed a profound and comprehensive knowledge of military matters, a keen intelligence, cool resolution and, above all, strength of character not to shrink from any responsibility at the most critical moments. When his tall form appeared among his troops, the calm strength and confidence expressed in his grave features communicated itself involuntarily to his men and every one looked up to his leader in full confidence. And Göben knew that with such troops he could attempt whatever he liked.



GENERAL V. GÖBEN.

The fall of Péronne had made an important change in the state of affairs at the Somme in favour of the Germans. It was no longer needful to move troops far in advance to protect the siege, slight advanced guards being sufficient to announce the approach of the enemy. The main part of the Army now could be withdrawn behind the Somme, and being covered by this strong natural obstacle, was able to effect a concentration at any point where the enemy showed himself.

The French had now to choose between three alternatives: First, they could try to advance straight upon Paris. In doing so, they would have encountered the front of the Prussian position, in the face of which they would have had to effect the difficult passage of the Somme in order then to engage the whole First Army that meanwhile would have assembled. Success in such an enterprise may well be regarded as out of the question.

The second alternative was to move upon Amiens or north of that city, with a

view to passing round the left flank of the Germans. The passages over the Somme in and near Amiens were, however, blocked by the citadel, and the bridges were all in the hands of the Germans. If the French were nevertheless to attempt forcing a passage anywhere, the First Army could bar their road, or still more effectually cross the river in force and on a broad front, and assail his flank and rear.

The third alternative open to the Army of the North was to move via St. Quentin and Laon to Reims, with the object of disturbing the lines of communication of the Germans, or of holding out a hand to Bourbaki's army approaching from the south; this indeed is reported to have been the plan of Gambetta, the then Minister of War. In that case the First Army could, marching off to the right, follow the enemy at his flank by several roads along the Somme, and at a suitable moment wheel round and fall upon him.

Considering all these things, General von Göben resolved to remain on the whole stationary also on the 10th of January. Only Memerty's Detachment moved somewhat to the east of Amiens, and occupied Corbie with the bridges there over the Somme. On the two following days also rest was not disturbed.

On the 10th of January Faiderbe had—unobserved by the Germans—made a slight step in advance and posted himself at Ervillers. Being still ignorant of the fall of Péronne, he seems to have aimed at its relief. On the 11th of January his XXIInd Corps arrived at Bapaume, driving out some squadrons of the 3rd Division of Cavalry, and his XXIIIrd Corps followed in the second line. Not till the evening of the same 11th of January did the General learn—"to his great amazement," as he himself owns—the fate of Péronne; he must have been very badly served by his spies. The Army of the North thereupon halted, and remained on the 12th and 13th at Bapaume. The French Commander evidently was undecided what he should do. He could not remain wholly inactive, being urged on by public opinion in northern France, which was clamouring for some real success. After two days' hesitation he resolved, on the 13th of January, to advance against the Middle-Somme. On the 14th the Army of the North stood in échelon on the road from Bapaume to Albert, and it was so posted that it could advance either upon Amiens or in a southward direction upon Bray.

Meanwhile the Germans were completing their array behind the Somme as had been planned since their occupation of Péronne; only the 3rd Division of Cavalry was to remain north of the river. The 15th Division, retaining possession of Bray, took up quarters on the left bank; the 3rd Reserve Division remained in the country near and west of Péronne; the 16th Division extended east of this fortress, and the 12th Division of Cavalry stood on the right flank by St. Quentin. On the 11th of January several battalions of Memerty's Detachment had occupied the line of the River Hallue, and on the 13th three battalions were advanced in the direction of Albert, but on the approach of the French, withdrawn again on the 14th. To augment his forces, General von Göben had ordered up on the 13th of January from Rouen, three more battalions (41st Regiment of Foot) and two batteries with the Staff of the 1st Division (General von Gayl). To simplify the management, these troops as well as Memerty's Detachment were placed under the command of General von der Gröben, as "the Combined Division of the First Army Corps." The 7th Regiment of Uhlans from the 3rd Division of Cavalry was joined to them as Divisional

Cavalry: the other three regiments of the 3rd Division of Cavalry were placed under the command of General Count zu Dohna, forming the "Combined Cavalry Brigade."

On the 13th of January reports came in at Amiens, that the French had been considerably reinforced by new levies of recruits and mobilised troops, and that numerous transports of troops had left Le Havre and Cherbourg for Dunquerque, to join the Army of the North. The latter report turned out to have been false, the former correct. In fact a new brigade (8½ battalions) commanded by Colonel Isnard, had been formed at Cambrai; our 12th Division of Cavalry had already been in collision with it in the beginning of January, at Guise. One more brigade (of 16 battalions) was assembled in Arras, under General Pauly, and was now ready for marching.

General von Göben did not allow himself to be induced by these reports to abandon his safe position behind the Somme, but remained unmoved also on the 14th of January, waiting events. Amiens was secured by Memerty's Detachment on the Hallue, and the 15th Division kept safe all the passages above the city. Accordingly the enemy was sure to encounter a line of defence in front of him, no matter whether he turned to Amiens or Bray; whilst the 16th and the 3rd Division of Reserve stood in readiness to fall upon his flank and rear.

THE EVENTS UP TO THE 18TH OF JANUARY.

Also on the 15th of January the Germans restricted themselves to sending out mere scouting and reconnoitring parties. The 16th Division discovered that the country south and south-east of Bapaume was strongly occupied. Memerty's Detachment and Count Dohna's Cavalry Brigade encountered hostile troops west of Albert, and also the 12th Division of Cavalry observed north of St. Quentin the advance of a strong column (Isnard's Brigade).

These observations clearly showed that the enemy stood facing both the wings of our position at the Somme, his main forces being still at Albert and Bapaume. General Faidherbe had in fact remained inactive on the 15th of January, but, on the other hand, Isnard's Brigade, according to orders, took the first step towards the occupation of St. Quentin, and completed that operation on the day following.

On the 15th of January Faidherbe, convinced that an advance across the Hallue or upon Bray would lead to no result, determined to march off on the following day to his left, and passing north of Péronne to reach a position near St. Quentin. From there he intended to disturb the German lines of communication and at the same time keep a large part of their forces engaged against himself. The danger of being himself surrounded he hoped to escape by a timely retreat upon the protecting fortresses. He had, moreover, been encouraged to engage on that enterprise by a despatch of Gambetta's delegate, M. de Freycinet, asking for some such support to a fresh sally that was then being prepared by the garrison of Paris.

Almost at the identical hour when the French Commander-in-Chief formed the plan which was destined to seal the fate of his army, it was divined by the German Commander at Amiens. It is a proof of the strategic sagacity of General von Göben, that he did not allow himself to be taken by surprise by doings of his enemy that were improbable and difficult to be foreseen. On the 13th of January he had ex-

pressed himself to a similar effect in a private letter, and now he said in so many words in a letter to General von Moltke: "What will the enemy do? I fancy that, seeing since our capture of Péronne we hold the line Amiens—Peronne, he will advance upon St. Quentin and Ham, in order—as seems to be his main object—to march upon Paris. I should then be in the delightful position of falling directly upon the enemy's flank."

On the 16th of January the Army of the North started on its march towards the left, intending that its principal forces should reach the line Nurlu—Fins on the first day. But in consequence of the unfavourable weather, of the frozen slippery ground and of their feeble marching capacity, the troops only reached Sailly-Saillisel and Combles late in the evening, thus falling short of the point aimed at by $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Pauly's newly-formed Brigade pushed forward from Arras as far as Bapaume; Isnard's Brigade, as has already been stated, marched to St. Quentin and occupied the town after a slight contest with the 12th Division of Cavalry, which now returned to Ham.

Even on the 16th of January General von Göben remained still as if ready for his dash forward. Before determining on a decisive step he wished to be fully informed about the intentions of the enemy. Only the 16th Division was concentrated more closely near Péronne, so as to have it ready at hand. At half-past 3 in the afternoon news arrived that the 12th Division of Cavalry had evacuated St. Quentin, and General von Göben also took this occurrence with much equanimity. He was persuaded that the main forces of the Army of the North could not yet have arrived so far, but to make sure, he ordered the 16th Division to advance upon St. Quentin on the 17th, his left wing meanwhile drawing the enemy's attention away from this place, by making an outflanking movement upon Albert. Colonel von Boecking who had arrived at Amiens with the 41st Regiment and a battery from Rouen, was ordered to come up on the road via Villers-Bretonneux, as far as Warfusée, thus marching in an easterly direction.

Late in the evening of the 16th of January and in the night before the 17th reports came in at the German Head-Quarters, which dissipated all doubt concerning the march of the enemy towards the east. Decisive was the report of an officer's patrol of the 7th Regiment of Uhlans, which announced that already on the 16th they had found Albert evacuated by the enemy. The attack on this place by the left wing of the Germans had accordingly ceased to have any object; and it had become a question of quickly and effectually thwarting the plans of the enemy, which were now fully understood.

To gain this end two alternatives offered themselves. It was clearly possible to fall with the First Army upon the rear of the enemy, and to cut him off from his fortresses. The great advantages of this movement were obvious and very tempting. The movements of the German Army were, however, determined by its main task, viz., to cover the siege of Paris. It could be foreseen, that if the enemy was circumvented in the north, he would all the more readily turn to the south and attack the communications of the Germans, and although his ultimate defeat was not doubtful, he could nevertheless meanwhile do a great deal of mischief. These considerations forced on the Germans the second alternative, viz., the resolve to prevent the enemy from breaking through to the south, and immediately to attack him wherever he could be found. On this General von Göben resolved without hesitation. In the shortest

possible time orders were issued that very night before the 17th of January, to make ready all the disposable forces for the marching off to the right.

To attack the enemy simultaneously from the front and in the flank, the Army was ordered to march on both sides of the Somme. On the southern bank the 12th Division of Cavalry marched from Ham eastwards to Flavy-le-Martel; the 3rd Division of the Reserve, the Brigade of Cavalry of the Guards and the Head-Quarters to Nesle; the 15th Division and the Corps Artillery to Licourt and Villers-Carbonel, and Von Boecking's Detachment to Harbonnières. On the northern bank the 16th Division and the 3rd Brigade of Cavalry of the Reserve (Von Strantz) arrived at Ham (having had slight collisions with the enemy's extreme right), and the troops of General Count von der Gröben (Memerty's Detachment and Count Dohna's Cavalry Brigade) reached the neighbourhood of Cléry on the Somme.

On the 17th of January the enemy had continued his movement of the day before, his XXIInd Corps and Payen's Division of the XXIIIrd Corps arriving in the region Vermand—Hancourt—Roisel, and Robin's Division in the country west of Fins; Pauly's Brigade followed in rear to Bertincourt. Isnard's Brigade remained in St. Quentin. On an average the French Army marched about 12 (English) miles; on the whole then better than on the preceding day; the slight performance of the 16th was, however, not yet compensated for by a long way. The relative positions of the armies had consequently changed greatly to the advantage of the First Army. Whilst on the 16th the main forces of the Army of the North were still concentrated on a narrow space, the German troops were distributed over a distance of 50 miles; on the 17th the French were spread over 25 miles, and the Germans were drawn together and occupied a nearly similar extent of ground. But, above all, the position of the two armies now was such that the French could, without fighting, no longer pursue their march in the intended direction.

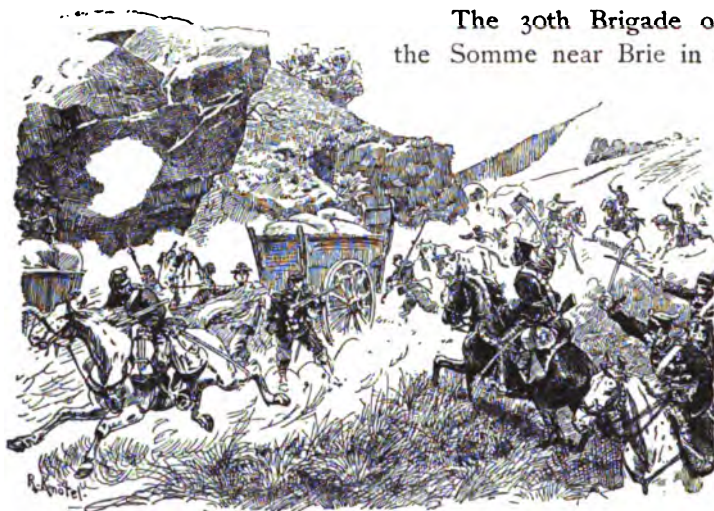
According to the reports coming in on the 17th of January they did not in the evening of that day doubt at the German Head Quarters, that the enemy had continued his march to St. Quentin; all they were in doubt about was, whether this point had already been passed in an eastern or southern direction. This point had to be cleared up on the 18th, and at the same time measures had to be taken that, do what he might, the enemy should not be allowed to escape. With this end in view General von Göben made the following dispositions for the 18th of January: General von Kummer was to advance via Etreillers and Vermand to St. Quentin, with the left wing of the Army, consisting of the 15th Division and the troops of General Count von der Gröben. If he encountered the enemy drawn up in array, he was merely to reconnoitre; if the enemy endeavoured to evade him by marching north he was to keep up with him, but if he moved south he was to attack forthwith. Of the troops of the right wing, the 12th Division of Cavalry was to advance as far as Moy and Vendeuil, going round St. Quentin by the south, whilst the 16th Division and the 3rd Division of the Reserve were provisionally to continue their march south of the Somme only as far as Jussy and Ham respectively, there to be employed as circumstances might require.

On the evening of the 17th there also arrived information from the Great Head-Quarters at Versailles, that on the 17th and 18th of January the 16th Infantry Brigade of the Army of the Maas would be forwarded by rail to Tergnier (15 miles

south of St. Quentin) and placed at the disposal of General von Göben, and that as the XIIIth Corps had received orders to move from Alençon to Rouen, some additional forces could be called up to the Somme thence. General von Göben consequently ordered the 16th Brigade to be detrained at Tergnier and there await orders, and three more battalions and one battery to leave Rouen immediately for Amiens.

The French Commander intended to concentrate his army more completely on the 18th of January and at the same time to cross the Upper Somme. The XXIIInd Corps—excepting Aynès' Brigade, which marched from Vermand via St. Quentin—was ordered to advance via Roupy and Grand-Seraucourt into the neighbourhood of Moy on the Oise; of the XXIIIrd Corps, Payen's Division was to march past St. Quentin to Sissy (also on the Oise, above Moy), Robin's Division as far as Bellenglise. Pauly's Brigade was to follow as far as Lempire to cover a retreat, if such should occur, and finally Isnard's Brigade was to remain at St. Quentin. The route prescribed for the 18th of January to the Prussian left wing led straight into the right flank of the French columns moving past Roupy and Grand-Seraucourt, and serious collisions became inevitable.

THE BATTLE OF TERTRY—POEUILLY ON JANUARY 18TH, 1871.



The 30th Brigade of the 15th Division crossed the Somme near Brie in the direction of Estrées at 8 o'clock in the morning; the 29th at St. Christ in the direction of Tertry and Beauvois. This latter encountered the rearmost brigade (Förster) of the XXIIInd French Corps, which carried its baggage with it, entirely contrary to the orders of General Faidherbe. The battle was opened by two squadrons of the King's Hussars, who dashed upon the enemy's train and caused

great confusion. Bessol's Division was thus compelled to wheel about and advance from Beauvois to attack the 29th Brigade at Trefcon. The 65th Regiment successfully repulsed several onsets of the French, till General du Bessol stopped the battle at 2.30 and ordered his Division to continue its march towards Grand-Seraucourt. The XXIIInd Corps crossed the Somme at that place, and spent the night south of St. Quentin.

The 30th Brigade also got involved in a fight. When General Paulze d'Ivoy heard the firing at Tertry he interrupted the march of his Corps (the XXIIIrd) from Roisel past Vermand, and sent Michelet's Brigade via Caulaincourt against the left flank of the 15th Division. But the 8th Battalion of Jägers, followed by the 1st

battalion of the 28th Regiment, rushed forward to meet them, and attacking with energy, forced an entry into Caulaincourt, which was already in possession of the French, and at about 3 p.m. made themselves masters of the place, which was feebly defended. General von Göben having given orders to avoid serious conflicts on that day, the 30th Brigade contented itself with maintaining possession of Caulaincourt.

Meanwhile an action had been brought on on the left flank of the 15th Division; for when the combined Division of General Count von der Gröben, marching past Péronne and Hancourt to Vermand, heard the thunder of artillery at Tertry, General von Memerty turned off in that direction, with 8 battalions, 6 squadrons and 28 guns. In Estrées he became aware that he would render more effective service if he turned against Vermand, whence the attack against the left flank of 15th Division came. After a thorough preparation by four batteries, the 4th Regiment of Grenadiers made an assault upon Poeuilly, which was held by the enemy, and forced an entry into the village. The French fled to Vermand, leaving numerous prisoners behind them, and were, during the flight, successfully attacked by two squadrons of the 14th Regiment of Uhlans.

The 4th Grenadiers continued the pursuit of the enemy till they lighted, west of Vermand, upon the whole of Payen's Division in array, and, moreover, saw themselves threatened in their left flank by Robin's Division. General von Memerty therefore returned to a position east of Poeuilly, and thence repulsed the pursuing enemy by a vigorous fire. On this occasion the General himself was severely wounded, and Colonel von Massow, Commanding Officer of the Grenadier Regiment Crown-Prince, provisionally undertook the command of the combined Division. Meanwhile Dohna's Cavalry Brigade had arrived on the left wing of this Division, and its battery cannonaded Robin's Division with shells. The French now remained inactive, and after a while marched off of their own accord. Thereupon the troops of General von der Gröben occupied quarters at Poeuilly and to the rear of it, and the 15th Division at Beauvois and Caulaincourt.

At 4 o'clock in the afternoon General Faidherbe had joined the XXIIIrd Corps of the French, which, after the battle, continued its march for concentration at St. Quentin. It passed the night in the town and in the hamlets to the west of it. Pauly's Brigade reached Lempire, and Isnard's Brigade remained in St. Quentin.

On the right wing of the First Army the 16th Division had reached Jussy unmolested, and the 3rd Division of the Reserve Flavy-le-Martel. The Reserve of the Army (Böcking's Detachment) arrived at Ham, Head Quarters being moved to the same place. The Corps Artillery had been forced to halt at Matigny, the villages in front of it being held up to noon by the enemy's infantry. The 12th Division of the Cavalry occupied quarters at Vendeuil. Its reconnoitring parties found that the French were still at St. Quentin, and that the country east of the Oise was clear of them. The losses of the German troops in the fights at Tertry and Poeuilly amounted to 17 officers and 359 rank and file. The enemy lost about 500 killed and wounded and an equal number of prisoners.

The events of the 18th convinced General Faidherbe that he was no longer able to continue his march to Laon or to retreat northwards, as he could not escape from his enemy without a fight. An advance southward between the Somme and the Oise offered little prospect of success, being exposed to a flank attack from the

west. Faidherbe accordingly determined to occupy a defensive position at St. Quentin on both banks of the Somme, and to accept battle on the day following. The XXIIIrd Corps reinforced by Isnard's Brigade was to be drawn up west of the town in a crescent form reaching from Fayet to Dallon; Pauly's Brigade was to move from Lempire to Bellicourt so as to secure the line of retreat to Cambrai. The XXIIInd Corps was ordered to draw nearer to St. Quentin, fronting south from Grugies as far as the road to La Fère.

On the German side General von Göben knew that the enemy had on the 18th just completed his concentration at St. Quentin. Although the severance of the First Army into two groups on both sides of the Somme was not free from danger, still he determined, trusting to the superiority of his officers and to the quality of his troops, to make on the 19th an assault along the whole line, converging on St. Quentin, so as to annihilate the enemy. ¹ He could further reckon on the support of a portion of the 16th Infantry Brigade, which could on the 19th appear on the field of battle. Acting on these ideas, he issued the following orders on the evening of the 18th of January: General von Kummer was to advance at 8 o'clock in the morning, with the left wing stationed west of St. Quentin, upon the town, past Vermand and Etreillers, to attack the enemy and if possible to outflank him from the north. From the south General von Barnekow was to push forward with the 16th Division and the 3rd Division of the Reserve along the line of rail and the road leading via Essigny-le-Grand to the town, and to occupy Grand-Seraucourt with a small detachment so as secure the communication between the two wings. Still further to the right the 12th Cavalry Division, together with the expected portions of the 16th Infantry Brigade coming from Tergnier, was to advance on the road from La Fère and endeavour to outflank the left wing of the French. The Reserve of the Army received orders to start from Ham at 9 o'clock and, north of the Somme, to follow the movements of the army. In case the enemy should evade the blow, he was to be pursued to the uttermost by all the forces.

THE BATTLE OF ST. QUENTIN ON THE 19TH OF JANUARY, 1871.

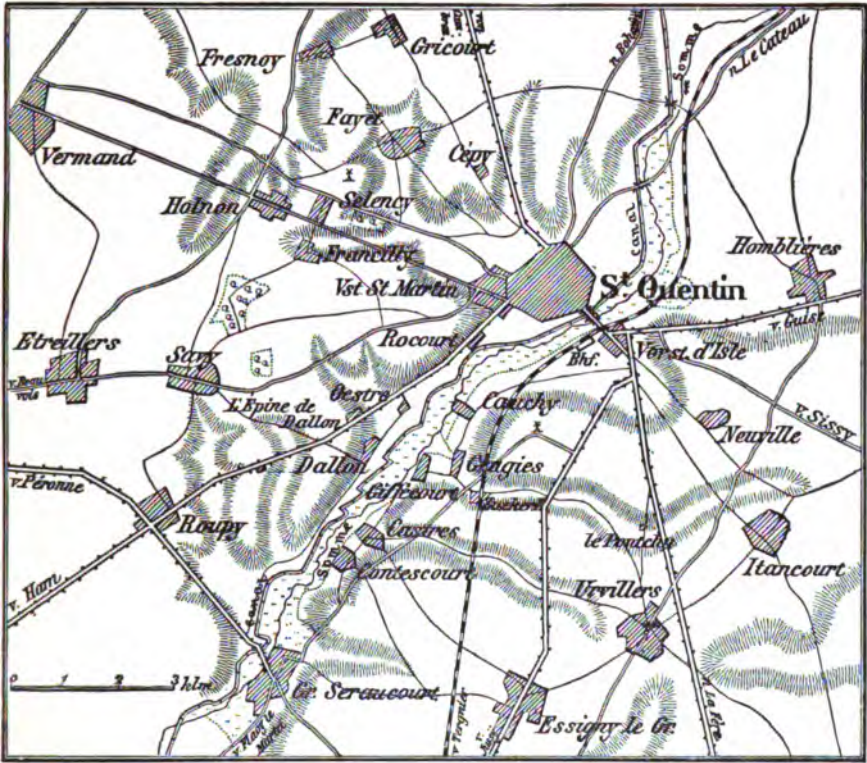
The battlefield of St. Quentin is divided into halves by the Somme and the Crozat canal running parallel with it. The Somme is here an insignificant brook, but the canal can be crossed only in few places, by the bridges. This compelled the Germans to carry on the contest in two wholly independent groups, lacking almost all communication with each other. The ground round St. Quentin is undulating and hilly, but the differences of elevation are nowhere of any moment. The alternations of frost and rain of the last few days had so softened the ground that, except on the highways, the movements of the troops were rendered very difficult; and this disadvantage was still further increased by the numerous quickset hedges which separated the different fields. The artillery was therefore exclusively restricted to action on highways, and even the cavalry could not make much progress. The line of railway too from Tergnier to St. Quentin lies in most places either in a deep cutting or on a high embankment, and thus forms an additional break in the com-

¹ It is to be noticed in the German tactics of this war, that the Commanders never aim at a mere victory, but at the total destruction of the enemy's forces. [*Trs.*]

munication of the several groups of combatants in the southern part of the field. The 19th of January was rainy, and so gloomy that by 5 p.m. it became so pitch-dark that the immediate neighbourhood was hardly discernible. In the morning the French troops were still busy moving into their several positions, when they were already being attacked on all the main roads.

THE CONTEST ON THE RIGHT GERMAN WING.

At 8 o'clock in the morning General von Barnekow ordered his troops (16th Division of Infantry and the 3rd Division of the Reserve), in all 13 Battalions, 15



ST. QUENTIN.

Squadrons and 7 Batteries, to advance towards St. Quentin; the 16th Division, followed by the 3rd Division of the Reserve, was to move from Jussy upon Essigny-le-Grand, and a flank-guard on the left (consisting of one battalion each from the 19th and 81st Regiments with three squadrons and a battery) was to advance, under Lieutenant-Colonel von Hymmen, upon Grand-Seraucourt. This last detachment was ordered to seize the passage across the river and thus secure the communications between the two wings of the German Army.

On the French side, Gislain's Brigade of Bessol's Division had occupied the villages Castres and Contescourt, and Förster's Brigade the heights south of Grugies.

In touch with these Derroja's Division deployed east of the line of railway, its left wing, somewhat drawn back leaning on the road from La Fère. General von Barnekow considered the heights before Grugies to be the critical point of the enemy's position, and determined to concentrate all his efforts upon it. The Prussian artillery having played upon it, the 31st Brigade, with the 29th Regiment leading, advanced to the attack at 11 o'clock. Four times the assault was made and each time it was repulsed, and indeed the enemy pursued with such impetuosity that he could be driven back only with difficulty in a hand-to-hand fight. The 32nd Brigade at first stood in reserve in a fierce shell fire of the enemy, but several of its battalions gradually joined in the contest. The 3rd Division of the Reserve was still kept back east of Essigny. To the left of the 16th Division Lieutenant-Colonel von Hymmen occupied Grand-Seraucourt, and at 9 o'clock he turned against Contescourt, but was unable to take it from his more numerous enemy. On the extreme right wing of General von Barnekow the 12th Cavalry Division² had towards noon pushed forward as far as Le Pontchu, but was unable to advance further from want of a sufficient force of infantry.

General von Barnekow did not think it advisable at once to bring up his Reserves, and so the battle on the right wing of the German Army remained as yet undecided.

THE CONTESTS OF THE LEFT WING.

Robin's Division had taken up a position on the western bank of the Somme, between Fayet and Francilly. Lagrange's Brigade of Payen's Division was posted on the road to Ham at L'Épine-de-Dallon and Oestre. The space between these two bodies of troops was soon filled by Isnard's Brigade, whilst Michelet's Brigade still stood in reserve west of the town.

From the extremest left wing of the German Army the Corps of General Count von der Gröben had left Poeuilly at 8 o'clock, and passing through Vermand arrived at about 9.30 at the village of Holnon, which was in the possession of Robin's Division. The Fusilier Battalion of the 44th Regiment took the place and drove the enemy back towards Selency, which place was also soon afterwards taken with the assistance of part of the Regiment Crown-Prince, and also the wind-mill height to the north of it. Prussian artillery was planted on it, and kept up a vigorous fire upon Robin's Division. Francilly, however, was for the time still in the possession of the French.

At the right of the troops of the 1st Corps, General von Kummer had started from Beauvais with the 15th Division, and arrived at 10 o'clock at Etreillers. The 29th Brigade took Savy without meeting with any resistance, and took possession of the small wood lying to the east of it, but in the larger wood north of it the enemy maintained his position. At noon Lagrange's Brigade endeavoured to retake Savy, but was repulsed by the 65th Regiment, the artillery at the north of the place vigorously assisting; the 33rd Regiment covered the right flank of the 29th Brigade. Soon afterwards the 30th Brigade arrived at Roupy and was there held in readiness.

Major-General von Gayl, Commander of the 1st Division of Infantry, had during

² With it was joined the 12th (Saxon) Battalion of Jägers and the 2nd Battalion of the 86th Regiment, which had meanwhile arrived from Tergnier.

the battle assumed the command of the troops of the 1st Corps, which at noon made a renewed attack from the left wing. Six companies of the 44th Regiment made a dash upon Fayet, the western part of which they took at about 1 o'clock; they were followed by two batteries, who engaged the artillery of the enemy at Cépy. Thereby the line of retreat of the XXIIIrd Corps to Cambrai was seriously imperilled. General Paulze d'Ivoy therefore called up Michelet's Brigade from its position in the Reserve west of St. Quentin, and advanced with these fresh forces against Fayet. The French succeeded in retaking the place; their attack upon the wind-mill height, however, was successfully repulsed by a Prussian flank-attack from Selency. Thus also on the left German wing no decisive success had been scored up to half-past one o'clock: Fayet, Francilly and the larger wood north of Savy were in the hands of the French, who fought with unexpected tenacity. On the road to Ham, even, the 15th Division could only with difficulty prevent an advance of the enemy, who endeavoured to outflank their right wing.

But meanwhile the German Commander-in-Chief had set in motion his Reserves on both banks of the Somme, to give new animation to the attack of his Army, which had met with a check.

THE DECISION.

During the whole of the morning General von Göben had been watching from Roupy the contest of the 16th Division on the (German) right of the Somme, which was already being carried on with great energy, when that of the left wing had not yet begun. Seeing that the 16th Division made but slight headway, he determined to support it; accordingly, as early as 11 o'clock, he ordered Böcking's detachment, which had arrived at Roupy, to cross the river at Grand-Seraucourt and go into action on the left of the 16th Division. At the same time he ordered the 15th Division to make ready a fresh Reserve at Roupy. For this purpose there were told off two battalions of Jägers and four batteries of the VIIIth Corps; all commanded by Major von Bronikowski.

Böcking's detachment moved from Grand-Seraucourt along the Somme towards Contescourt.

As soon as the artillery had taken effect, the 41st Regiment and Hymmen's Detachment advanced to the attack upon Contescourt, took the village by assault, and inflicting heavy loss upon the enemy, drove him back through Castres to the heights of Grugies. Colonel von Böcking then reformed his battalions and meanwhile caused his guns to be directed upon the enemy's infantry drawn up on the height. Here the whole French Division Bessol, reinforced by several battalions of Derroja's Division, stood drawn up in a favourable position. Thirty Prussian guns thundered against them with such effect that after quite a short time a considerable disturbance among them was distinctly perceptible. At 2.15 eight companies of the 41st Regiment advanced to make a decisive assault. With incomparable valour the East Prussians stormed the height from all sides on the west of the line of railway, and after a stout resistance they hurled the fivefold superior forces of the enemy down into the valley of Grugies.

This brilliant success reacted upon the whole front of the right wing of the German Army. It relieved the 16th Division and prevented the French from turning

with superior forces upon the feeble body of infantry of the 12th Division of Cavalry on the right flank. General von Barnekow now moved to the front his Reserves from Essigny, and was just preparing to attack the enemy's position east of the line of railway, when Pittié's Brigade delivered a fierce counter-attack from both sides of the highway. Being, however, cannonaded on their right by Colonel von Böcking's Artillery, assailed unexpectedly on their left by Von Strantz's Brigade of Cavalry of the Reserve, and encountered in front by the resistance of the 16th Division, the Brigade had soon to abandon its attempt and streamed back to the Windmill height south of St. Quentin, pursued by the Prussian infantry.

Thereby Bessol's Division standing fast at Grugies was threatened in its left flank. In this protracted contest the strength of the Gardes Mobiles was spent, whilst the Prussian troops, spite of their heavy losses, were full of ardour to complete their victory. General Du Bessol was forced to evacuate Grugies and to fall back, like the rest, to the Windmill height south of St. Quentin. When he arrived there, the French troops were already so disorganized that all resistance was at an end. Before the Germans had time to carry out with the whole right wing of the army

an outflanking attack upon the Windmill height, the French had abandoned the whole position and withdrew, for the rest in good order, towards St. Quentin. Now the whole German front pressed after them; the Cavalry successfully joined in.

Böcking's Detachment rushed along the railway embankment towards the station, and the 16th Division entered the suburb d'Isle. Here, however, they only overtook the rear-guard of the XXIInd Corps, which had marched through the town and then turned off in the direction of Bohain and Le Cateau. General Count Lippe endeavoured with his cavalry to cut off the French line of retreat, but found the villages in front of him in possession of French infantry and was unable to force his way through.

Meanwhile the left wing of the First Army



GENERAL FAIDHERBE AT ST. QUENTIN.

on the right bank of the Somme had renewed its movements and brought them to a victorious conclusion.

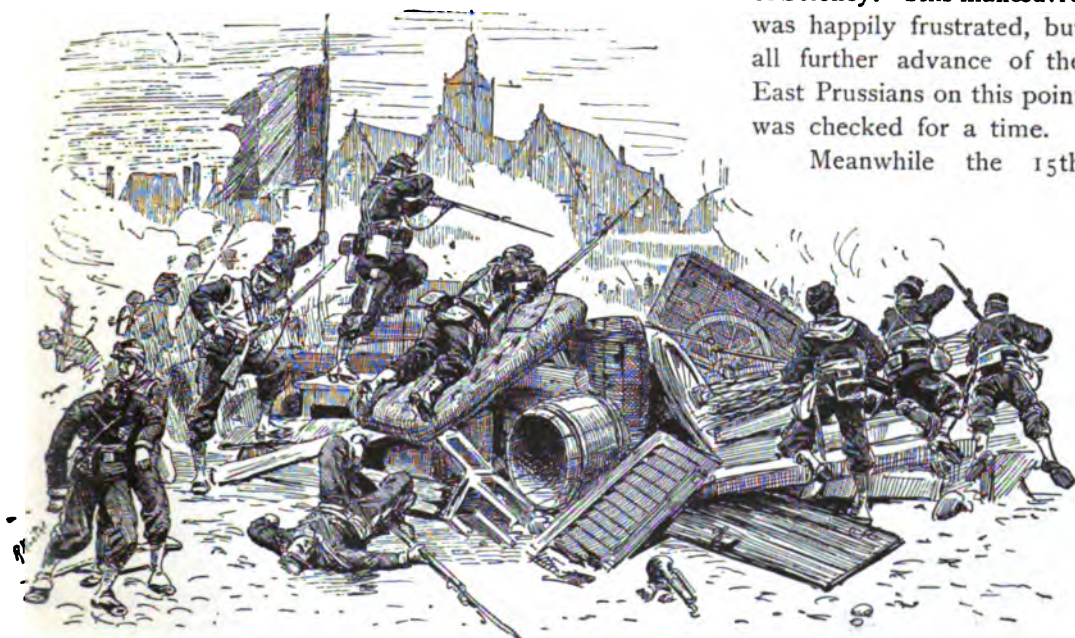
At one o'clock General von Göben issued to the newly formed Reserve at Roupy, under Major von Bronikowski, the order to deliver an attack along the great highway. The 1st battalion of the 28th Regiment first drove back some detachments of the enemy that had pushed forward to a farmstead north-east of Roupy, and then, jointly with the 2nd Battalion they took by storm L'Epine-de-Dallon. The enemy, losing many prisoners, retreated upon the height north of Oestre.

At the same time the struggle blazed up afresh on the extreme left wing. Here six companies of the Regiment Crown-Prince burst forth from Holnon and Selency against Francilly, and forced an entrance into that fiercely contested village, spite of the hot fire of the defenders. Six companies of the 4th and 44th Regiments at the same time ward off a flank attack which the French made, issuing from the larger wood north of Savy. The enemy withdrew to the height south-east of Francilly, where his supports received him. So far his resistance was shaken, but not yet broken. Soon, however, a complete change was to take place.

When General von Göben observed the successes of his right wing south of St. Quentin and the advance of Bronikowski's Detachment, he ordered the 15th Division also to renew its attack. But General von Kummer had already of his own accord ordered the 29th Brigade to take the height in front of it. From Francilly General von Gayl supported with his right wing the efforts of the 15th Division, but was forced at the same time to beat off an assault against his left wing. This was made by Michelet's Brigade, that, starting from Fayet, advanced against the East-Prussian battalions, and at the same time Pauly's Brigade coming to the battlefield from the north endeavoured to advance via Gricourt against the Windmill height north

of Selency. This manoeuvre was happily frustrated, but all further advance of the East Prussians on this point was checked for a time.

Meanwhile the 15th



ENGAGEMENT IN THE MARKET PLACE OF ST. QUENTIN.

Division had successfully carried out its movement. The 29th Brigade leading the van, the whole force advanced at beat of drum in deployed front, powerfully supported by the play of 48 guns, which were placed right athwart the road from Savy to St. Quentin. This rush the French troops, already ill at ease, were not able to endure. They fell back, and at 4 o'clock they left the height west of the suburb St. Martin in the hands of the 29th Brigade. Now Major von Bronikowski also took possession of Oestre and the northern heights. The French evacuated Rocourt and retired into the suburb St. Martin. Here the enemy made a stand, being able to make an obstinate defence in the gardens and houses till several Prussian companies coming from Rocourt succeeded in gaining a footing in the suburb. The street fight was still raging furiously, when the German right wing coming across the canal bridge was already entering St. Quentin from the south.

At 4 o'clock General Faidherbe was already aware that the XXIIIrd Corps was unable to hold its own and he had to face the alternative of a nocturnal retreat, or of being shut in St. Quentin. Before he had time to arrive at a decision either way he met in the town General Lecointe, the Commander of the XXIIInd Corps, who informed him that his troops also had been forced to abandon their positions south of St. Quentin and were retreating in good order towards Le Cateau. General Faidherbe now sent orders to the XXIIIrd Corps also to retreat to Le Cateau. Michelet's and Pauly's Brigades had already, however, of their own accord started for Cambrai, and the French battalions still fighting in the western suburb were thereby exposed to great danger. Attacked in front by the 15th Division and by Count von der Gröben, in the rear by the troops that had formed the German right wing, they were for the greater part forced to surrender, and General Faidherbe himself owed his escape to the help of the inhabitants. At half-past six, when it was quite dark, the street fight came to an end.

The German troops were much exhausted both by the contest of nearly ten hours' duration and by struggling in the swampy, sodden ground. They looked for quarters in the conquered positions, none went beyond St. Quentin. The town was occupied by Böcking's Detachment and a part of the 16th Division.

In the battle of St. Quentin 33,000 Germans fought against 40,000 French. They paid dearly for their victory with the loss 96 officers and 2304 rank and file. The enemy lost about 3500 men, as well as 9000 prisoners and six guns.

The battle of St. Quentin was the first *decisive* defeat of the French Army of the North and was fated to be also its last. The heavy losses of the 19th of January and the disorganizing effects of the fierce and protracted struggle had broken for a long time to come the power of resistance of the French troops. They had defended themselves bravely and succumbed with honour, but to employ them once more in the open field was, at all events for a time, out of the question.

On the side of the Germans we behold the most brilliant indications of a generalship having only one object in view: the total destruction of the enemy. All other considerations were subordinated to this aim; it is the only one which promises great results as long as wars go on. Indeed it was a dangerous thing, with an Army severed into two portions, to attack an enemy posted in a strong position, superior in numbers and fighting desperately; but General von Göben considered the internal combination of his troops to be strong enough to venture on such an undertaking—and

the result proved that he was in the right. The German forces were set to work on the 19th of January with the expressed object of not allowing even fragments of the French Army to break through to the south or east, and of dealing that Army a decisive blow. The brilliant issue was the worthy conclusion of the whole campaign in the north of France. Thus the victory of St. Quentin is one of the most beautiful laurel-leaves in the wreath of victory of the German Army, and history will always quote Göben's name among the best of German Commanders.

END OF THE CAMPAIGN.

During the night before the 20th of January General von Göben gave orders for the pursuit of the enemy with all possible vigour. Well he knew that he only reaps the full fruit of victory who gives his enemy no rest and keeps him pitilessly on the alarm, till his last strength is spent. Of course it requires a resolute will to impose fresh efforts and dangers on one's own troops, who have for a whole day marched, fought and hungered, instead of granting them the longed for repose. But General von Göben was a man of such will, and he knew how to give his will effect. The order of the day for the 20th of January demanded a march of some 25 miles, to overtake the enemy, if possible, before he reached his fortresses. In obedience to this command Count Dohna's Cavalry Brigade, at 6 o'clock in the morning, hastened in advance of the other troops via Le Catelet to Cambrai; the Division of General von Gayl followed as far as Rumilly, immediately south of the fortress, and behind it marched the 15th Division as far as Lempire, west of Le Catelet. The 16th Division and Böcking's Detachment marched further east, their advanced guard reaching Ligny, and their main body Clary; and on the extreme right wing the 12th Cavalry Division pushed forward past Bohain and Guise towards Le Cateau. But everywhere only stragglers were found. The Army of the North, which had come to this evil plight mainly on account of its feeble performances in marching, had saved itself by a forced march of more than 25 miles. Once more was seen what the history of war so often has proved, that defeated troops develop an unexpected marching capacity when endeavouring to escape pursuit.

General von Göben therefore ordered, on the 21st of January, the 12th Division of Cavalry to take up a position to the east of Clary, the 16th Division at Caudry on the road Le Cateau—Cambrai, and the troops of General von Kummer (which includes Von Gayl's Division) at Marcoing west of the road St. Quentin—Cambrai. From the report of the German reconnoitring parties it appeared that the enemy had forwarded a considerable portion of his forces by train from Arras, Cambrai and Le Cateau to the northern fortresses of Lille, Douay and Valenciennes.

Accordingly, since there could now be no immediate fear of any serious undertaking on the part of the Army of the North and as nothing could be done against the fortresses from want of siege-matériel, General von Göben determined to grant his men a short time of repose and then to lead them back to the Somme, retaining possession of some of the advanced posts. This was done during the following days, and on the 29th of January there stood: of the 15th Division, the 29th Brigade at Villers-Bocage, the 30th at Acheux; the 16th Division and the Brigade of the Cavalry of the Reserve at Bray on the Somme and to the south of it; the Corps Artillery

of the VIIIth Corps at Warfusée; the 3rd Division of the Reserve, together with the Brigade of Cavalry of the Guards, at Chaulnes, and the 12th Division of Cavalry at St. Quentin. *

Amiens was again the seat of Head-Quarters, and to protect the town a mixed detachment as well as the 7th Cavalry Brigade was pushed forward towards the west.

In these positions General von Göben intended to wait and see if the enemy would again venture to step forth from the protecting line of his fortresses; but in the night of the 29th of January news arrived of the conclusion of the armistice. The campaign in the north of France was at an end.

* The Battalions of the 16th Brigade of Infantry allotted to it had returned to Paris.



CHAPTER X

ORLEANS

By ADOLF VON HEINLETH^{*}
General of Infantry.

INTRODUCTION

THE Imperial Throne of France had been shattered at Sedan, and the slight fragments of the Imperial Government were swept away by the revolutionary flood of the 4th of September in Paris.

The German Armies were drawing nigh to the Capital, and whilst one French Army captured at Sedan was being led off to the German fortresses, another was starving within the walls of Metz, being held fast in an iron embrace, and was aware of its approaching end.

But neither France's power nor will to resist were broken by these dreadful blows. The creation of a new army was progressing apace. At least 800,000 men bound to serve in the army were at the disposal of the government, and of this force about 700,000 men were in the provinces. Half of the men could be armed with chassepots, and the rest with serviceable muskets of various patterns. Moreover, the well-managed military workshops and the productive industry of the country were able to supply within a short time the uniforms and accoutrements of the new troops as well as the needful guns and trains. It was reasonably expected that the hosts so formed would gradually become good soldiers, there being no lack of Generals and Officers, some of them very capable.

The new Republican Government, animated by the fiery spirit of Gambetta, was resolved on a resistance to the knife, and by evoking the memories of 1793 they succeeded in inflaming the proud national consciousness of the French people into a fierce glow of patriotic inspiration. From palace as from hut the French youths streamed voluntarily to the standards; money and money's worth were liberally contributed towards the national defence; free-corps were formed, who at their own charges and risk engaged in guerilla warfare against the German troops. A resolution full of hatred took possession of the great mass of the people and often broke out in a wild fury fraught with danger.

As the danger of the complete investment of Paris kept drawing nearer and nearer

^{*} General von Heinleth died before finishing this article; Major Endres of the Royal Bavarian General Staff sifted the materials and finished it. General von Heinleth had from the beginning the advantage of this officer's coöperation, and made him acquainted with his views and experiences.

some members of the Provisional Government were sent off to Tours ¹ on the 13th of September, to carry out the creation and formation of the Army in the provinces and to give effect to the one main object of its activity—the relief of Paris. Their first aim was to assemble a military force south of the Loire.

The German Commanders, though naturally ill-informed on all these points of detail, nevertheless speedily divined the principal aims and purposes of the French. As early as the 15th of September the German Third Army advancing against the country south of Paris was ordered to push its cavalry forward towards the Loire as quickly as possible, it being reported that the enemy was endeavouring to form an Army of Reserve behind that river.

In obedience of this order the 10th Cavalry Brigade crossed the Seine at Melun on the 18th, but everywhere it encountered *Francs-tireurs* of Paris, and levies of the territorial National Guards of the surrounding districts. Not until the 1st Bavarian Corps, hitherto employed in settling matters at Sedan, was marching on Longjumeau and had sent forward a considerable force in support of the 2nd Division of Cavalry (Prince Albrecht of Prussia, the father) to Fontainebleau, Malesherbes and Pithiviers, did the cavalry succeed in concentrating its main forces at Pithiviers. Further west, in the neighbourhood of Rambouillet, the 6th Cavalry Division had frequent collisions with armed bands of the enemy.

The appearance of Bavarian Infantry at Pithiviers had caused a tremendous confusion in Orleans. The garrison of the town, twelve companies of *Gardes Mobiles*, who were posted at the northern edge of the forest of Orleans, hastily escaped in the night of the 20th across the Loire, and General Peytavin gave orders ² to blow up all the bridges across the Loire in the *arondissement*. Up to the 23rd there was not a French soldier in Orleans; but on that day some hastily gathered troops of the newly formed XVth Corps entered the city, viz., a marching Regiment (No. 29), a Regiment of *Gardes Mobiles* (No. 12), a Regiment of Algerian Rifles, ³ two Batteries and one Brigade of Cavalry. To these troops were also joined the *Mobiles du Loiret*, who had fled, and *Francs-tireurs* of Paris. On the 24th they occupied the whole northern and eastern edge of the forest of Orleans from Chevilly as far as Ouzouer-sur-Loire. The Cavalry with its Artillery and the Algerian Rifles were pushed forward as far as Artenay and Bazoches-les-Gallerandes.

On the 25th, horsemen of the 4th Division of Cavalry came in collision with the French horse, and on the 26th they drove them back to Chevilly. On that occasion the whole extent of the positions of the French advanced troops was reconnoitred, and Prince Albrecht, seeing that it was impossible to penetrate the woodlands with his own troops, assembled his Division at Toury and Pithiviers, where he was joined on the 28th by two battalions of Bavarians. The slight cavalry contest had spread terror in Orleans for the second time; a council of war, hastily summoned, ordered the evacuation of the forest and of the town, and on the morning of the 27th the French troops had already crossed the Loire and were marching upon Blois. It required the intervention of the Delegation of Tours to induce the troops, after

The so-called "Delegation of Tours."

² These orders were actually carried out on the 24th, only the bridges in Sully and Orleans remained intact owing to the resistance of the local authorities.

³ Also known as "Turkos."

receiving further considerable reinforcements from the XVth Corps, to return a few days later to their former positions.

On the 4th of October General Reyau, the Commander of the Division of French Cavalry now assembled at Chevilly, endeavoured by a reconnaissance in force to obtain clear information about the German forces in front of him. With two regiments of infantry, one battalion of rifles, two brigades of cavalry and eight guns he advanced against Toury from several sides. After a slight contest Prince Albrecht evacuated the place, retreating to Etampes, where his whole Division assembled.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Third Army, being informed of these events and of the assembly of a strong Corps of the enemy on the Loire and the arrival of African troops, thought it not improbable that the French would advance and make an assault upon the southern line of investment before Paris. Accordingly on the 6th the 1st Bavarian Corps was ordered to assemble at Arpajon and the 22nd Division at Montlhéry, and General von der Tann was appointed Commander of both forces. These concentrated forces were covered on the right by the 6th, in front by the 4th, and on the left by the 2nd Cavalry Divisions.

But as yet the French did not think of making an attack. General Reyau had again returned to Artenay, where he was watched in his camp by the 4th Division of Cavalry, who on the 7th had asked General von der Tann to supply them with infantry in order to attack Artenay. The Bavarian General enquiring at the Great Head-Quarters if such an enterprise would accord with the intentions of the Commanders, received in reply the order to advance upon Etampes. When General von der Tann arrived on the 8th at

Etampes he found there awaiting him an order from the Great Head-Quarters, to clear the country west as far as Chartres and south as far as Orleans of the enemy, also to occupy the town of Orleans and, according to circumstances, to pursue the enemy as far as Tours.

Meanwhile General de la Motterouge had arrived at Orleans with the somewhat indefinite instructions from the French Minister of War to do something or other as speedily as possible for the sake of public opinion. Accordingly he gave orders on the 9th of October that the still incompletely organized troops of the XVth Corps in Vierzon, Bourges and Nevers should speedily come to Orleans. This movement was to be covered at Artenay by General Reyau with his eight Battalions, seven Regiments of Cavalry and ten guns, and at Pithiviers by General Morandy with a strong Brigade of Infantry.



GENERAL V. D. TANN.

These arrangements on the part of the French on one side and of the Germans on the other led to that endless series of combats, in which the German troops stemmed and rolled back the floods of men pouring in from south and west in ever recurring waves, bent on bursting through the investment of the French Capital.

ARTENAY AND ORLEANS.

The German troops who were concentrated on the 8th of October round Etampes and Etrechy had routed and put to flight at Wörth the proud armies of the Empire, at Sedan the Eagles of a whole army had drooped before them. With loud exultation



LIEUT.-COLONEL V. HEINLETH.
(Chief of the General Staff of v. d. Tann.)

they greeted the order of the 9th to advance upon Orleans; they knew that a fresh career of victory was being opened to them. How could the slackly organized Mobiles withstand their iron discipline? The Beauce¹ lay spread out before them in the brilliant sunshine of an autumn morning. The slightly undulating plain spreading out towards the horizon in yellow shimmer was fated in the coming winter nights to be swept by snowstorms driving over the gleaming bivouac-fires. Now a light smoke rose curling from the peaceable stone-built, stone-wall-encircled farmhouses, whose well-filled barns were destined soon to burn fiercely, and whose rooms to shelter many a man wounded to the death or raving in fever. The dense forest reposed in the light of the early morning, but from its edge many a deadly bullet would speed into German breasts, and in its groves and thickets many a Bavarian and Thuringian

would be discovered by the scared peasantry, and find an unknown grave in some hidden glade.

As yet all this was hidden in the lap of the future, but the soldier cares not for the morrow; he lives for the moment, that alone is his, and this present moment was full of joyous promise. A rich country, easy victories, and there in the south, by the banks of the far-famed Loire, the towering city as the proud prize of Victory. To Orleans! to Orleans! ²

During the last few days *Francs-tireurs* had been seen in considerable numbers in

¹ The Beauce is the name of a level tract of land south-west of Paris, so smiling and fertile that it has been called the granary of the Capital. [*Trs.*]

² The name of Orleans sounds romantic in every German ear, thanks to Schiller's noble drama "The Maid of Orleans." [*Trs.*]



BAVARIAN CHEVEAUXLEGER.

the neighbourhood of Angerville; lurking in their hiding-places within the deep valley of the brook Juine, they had shot many a trooper of the reconnoitring cavalry. General von der Tann therefore resolved on the 9th to move with his infantry on a wide front towards Angerville, thoroughly to search out this valley and to drive the French dislodged from it into the hands of the cavalry that had been sent a-head to surround them; however, this only led to a few slight skirmishes. Those fantastically adorned gentlemen had preferred in the night to hasten on to the sheltering forest of Orleans; the territorial National Guards had buried their arms and hastily donned the blouse. In the evening the German force was encamped in the neighbourhood of Angerville,

on the right the 4th Division of Cavalry had been pushed forward, on the left the 2nd Division of Cavalry was reconnoitring and reported that strong forces of the enemy—the troops of Morand—were assembled at Pithiviers.

General von der Tann did not think much of the danger to his left flank; if he marched straight upon Orleans, then he threatened the retreat of the enemy at Pithiviers and it was to be expected that he would decamp without further pressure. Accordingly on the 10th the Army was ordered to march upon Artenay. The 1st Bavarian Division of Infantry, followed by the 22nd Division, was to move forward on the great Paris highway; the 3rd Bavarian Brigade was ordered to move along by roads to the east, and the 4th Brigade to the west of the said highway. The 4th Division of Cavalry should turn aside to the west, via Orgères, and strike upon the road Chateaudun—Orleans, whilst the 2nd Division of Cavalry should observe the enemy at Pithiviers.

At 9 o'clock in the morning the Bavarian advanced troops encountered French rifles north of Artenay, which appeared to be strongly occupied, as well as the villages Vilchat and Assas to the east, and Antroches to the west of the great highway, and considerable masses of cavalry made their appearance between Poupry and Artenay; there was no doubt that now strong bodies of regular troops were being met. A direct attack in front would, according to all appearance, have cost much blood, and in the most favourable case would probably only have caused the enemy to retire and find a more favourable position along the edge of the forest at Chevilly; but General von der Tann aimed at dealing the enemy a much harder blow. He wished to detain him in front, till the 2nd and 4th Divisions of Cavalry should appear at his flanks; then he wished the Bavarian Corps, which would by that time have come up, to storm Artenay, and the German horse to cut off the retreat of the fleeing enemy to the shelter of the forest.

The Bavarian Artillery deployed so as to be ready to carry out this plan, being covered by the 1st Infantry Brigade south of Dambron. Towards 11 o'clock the 2nd Brigade appeared on the field, deployed east of the highway and pressed the enemy's advanced troops back upon his main position. As time went on the Bavarian line of artillery was gradually reinforced, the 3rd Brigade was posted as a Reserve at



SKIRMISH WITH THE OUT-POSTS.

of the enemy did not await the onset; the cavalry leading and the infantry following, a whole mass of fugitives hurriedly sought shelter in the forest of Orleans; only their rear-guard, formed of chasseurs and Turkos, bravely stood their ground at Artenay, but the Bavarians pouring in, bore them down and pursued them towards the south. From west and east the German Cavalry galloped after the fugitives. Three guns and upwards of 1000 unwounded prisoners fell into the hands of the conquerors. Fresh troops, coming from Orleans, were just arriving at La Croix-Briquet; these were either swept away by the stream of fugitives or made prisoners. More than 800 killed and wounded French covered the field, the conquerors bought their victory with a loss of 6 officers and 218 rank and file.

Even before the fleeing cavalry poured into Orleans a fearful panic had fallen upon the city. Enticed by curiosity, many of the inhabitants had early in the morning gone to Artenay on horseback and in carriages to witness the delightful spectacle of the total destruction of the foreign barbarians, but being roughly greeted by the German shells, the gay multitude speedily ran home again and terrified the whole city by their terror-stricken countenances and exaggerated reports, declaring that the wicked Uhlans were following close upon their heels. At last General de la Motterouge promised that during the night reinforcements would arrive and that in the morning he would prevent the approach of the Germans upon Orleans. As the day advanced, however, the General grew more and more irresolute. The fleeing cavalry galloped through the town, shouting "Sauve qui peut," and crossing the bridge, sought safety deep in the interior of the Sologne.¹ The undisciplined hosts of infantry threw away baggage and arms, or in a drunken fit, fired off their rifles in the streets of the city. That word of ill omen, "Treachery," first softly and insidiously passed from

¹ The Sologne is a marshy district south of Orleans beyond the Loire. [*Trs.*]

mouth to mouth through the raving multitude, and at last struck with shrill shouts, the ears of the distracted Generals.

With such troops it was not possible to beat a German army. The wisest thing would have been immediately, on the 10th, to commence the retreat behind the Loire, but from fear of public opinion General de la Motterouge could not make up his mind to do that; but neither did he wish to fight a decisive battle, foreseeing as he did the total destruction of his forces. Thus hesitating between two plans, he decided upon a half-measure, which would neither save his own reputation, nor protect his men from heavy loss. He postponed his retreat till the following morning and charged the best troops at his disposal to cover his retreat along the line Saran—Ormes.

Considering the advanced time of day and the dense, impervious woodlands to be crossed, General von der Tann abandoned all idea of an immediate pursuit. He believed that he could calculate on the enemy's adopting the right measures and speedily evacuating Orleans; accordingly he anticipated no serious resistance for the 11th, and determined on that day to advance against the city on a broad front.

From the southern edge of the forest of Orleans onwards the country loses the characteristics of the Beauce; it is covered with vineyards and orchards; villages, farms and villas are crowded together and lie almost hidden amidst the luxuriant vegetation. For a distance of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles outside Orleans the Paris and Chartres high roads are lined on both sides by an uninterrupted row of houses, which, surrounded by stone walls or iron railings, greatly favour the defence. The ground between these high roads is covered with houses, gardens and walls in irregular profusion; high hedges line the lateral roads. All view or prospect is obstructed and neither artillery nor cavalry can be employed; defending infantry on the other hand find innumerable places of support and cover, where they can keep renewing their resistance after being defeated elsewhere, the aggressor all the while being unable to estimate the strength of his enemy. The contest resolves itself into a series of disconnected single combats withdrawn from all control of the commanding officers.

In the west only the neighbourhood of Ormes bears the stamp of a fairly open plain; for a long time strong field-fortifications had been built here. Similarly in the east, Saran, the railway-station of Les Aubrays and the gas-works to the south of it had been carefully prepared for defence. Still further south the high railway embankment of the line Orleans—Le Mans encircled the city like a strong rampart of a fortification. Finally, the outermost boulevard of the city was completely blocked by the octroy-barriers. "Here nothing was needed but the steadfast courage of the defenders, and this the newly-formed French forces did not lack." (Moltke.)

The French had concentrated their forces on three points along the line Ormes—Le Petit-Sougis, which has a length of $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Six battalions and one battery stood in the entrenchments of Ormes and further forward as far as Les Barres; two battalions and one battery commanded the exit from the wood by Sary and La Tête-Noire; Bel-Air and its environs were held by five battalions and behind these two battalions lay entrenched in the fortified railway-station of Les Aubrays and in the gas-works. Further, a reserve of $3\frac{1}{2}$ battalions and 6 batteries stood ready at the northern edge of Orleans. Of these $18\frac{1}{2}$ battalions ¹ only four had fought on the 10th and only one had suffered

¹ These consisted of $15\frac{1}{2}$ Battalions of the Line and 3 Battalions of Gardes Mobiles.

any considerable losses. The rest were fresh troops and had left their respective dépôts each 1200 strong. These numbers being drawn from French sources, justify us in assuming that there were at least 20,000 men arrayed for defence against the Germans.

Against this line of defence Von der Tann's Army advanced on the morning of the 11th in three columns; the 22nd Division with five Bavarian batteries from Les Barres was to use the highway from Chartres and march through Ormes, the 4th Bavarian Brigade was to take the road from Gidy to Saran, and the 3rd Bavarian Brigade, followed by the 1st Division of Infantry was to take the Paris road past Cercottes and Bel-Air. The 22nd Division numbered 6000 men divided into 8½ battalions; the Bavarian Corps had at most 15,000 men, forming 20 very incomplete battalions.

The German superiority in infantry was slight; their cavalry could not be used at all, and their artillery only in the open country at Ormes; yet the country was, as has already been pointed out, specially well fitted for defence.

General von der Tann rode with the 22nd Division. Just as it was crossing the gentle ridge south of Huêtre the mighty towers of the cathedral of Orleans rose in the south out of the light morning-mists of the beautiful autumn morning; a sun-lit prize of victory greeted with loud shouts of exultation by Bavarians and Thuringians; but at the same time the first shots of the enemy crashed forth from Bricy and Les Barres, and on the road Orleans—Ormes the glittering of many arms indicated columns on the march.

Les Barres was evacuated by the enemy after a few shots from the guns, and now the 44th Brigade with the Bavarian Batteries advanced along the highway against Ormes, and to its left the 43rd Brigade against La Borde. It was 11 o'clock, when this movement was entered upon; loud noise of battle from the east announced that the Bavarians were already hotly engaged, which lent wings to the advancing Prussians, and now the first shells come whistling from Ormes against the advancing columns. To the Bavarians they are old friends from Wörth and Sedan and are greeted by them with delight. Six German batteries south and north of the highway reply to the fire and rapidly repulse attempted counter-attacks from the entrenchments. Within the entrenchments, however, the enemy stands firm, although the 43rd Brigade is already beginning to turn his right wing at La Borde.

After one hour's artillery-fire the French artillery was forced to withdraw, but the entrenchments had suffered very little; these are now approached to within 800 paces by one Prussian and one Bavarian battery, and their shells cause the utmost disorder among the defenders. At this moment the 83rd Regiment, which had hitherto been waiting under cover, appeared and made a surprise rush at full speed upon the enemy, amidst joyous greetings from the batteries. After a short, fierce fire the French flee in complete disorder; 1000 men are made prisoners by the 83rd and by the outflanking 43rd Brigade of Infantry.

It being impossible to get a wide view over the field, the magnitude of the success gained was not immediately understood, but as a matter of fact after one o'clock the 22nd Division nowhere again encountered any organized bodies of the enemy. All had fled to Orleans, where they were assembled and taken across the Loire. Only small isolated bodies of infantry had fortified themselves in the houses, compelling the Prussian Division to search out house by house and thus to delay the pursuit.

Meanwhile the columns of the 1st Bavarian Corps had also arrived in the district south of the forest, and were here engaged in a number of fierce disconnected combats for the possession of houses and copses, of vineyards and garden walls. First the 4th Brigade issued out of the wood at Sary and La Tête-Noire. Saran and all the houses and cottages around were occupied by a numerous enemy; every building had been converted into a small fort and had to be stormed; the artillery could only join in with 8 guns. Not till 2 o'clock did Saran fall into the hands of the Bavarians, many of whom pursued the fleeing French in the direction of Bel-Air and up to the railway embankment at Granges-des-Groues.

The bloodiest engagement fell to the lot of the 3rd Brigade; it advanced as stated above, along the highway, with five battalions, and had sent its two other battalions of the 12th, commanded by Colonel Narciss, into the forest to the east as flank guard. The main column in rapid assault took Cercottes held by the enemy's advanced troops; in the forest Colonel Narciss drove the Papal Zouaves before him. Having taken Le Petit-Sougis with little trouble, the head of the main column was received by a hot fire from the foremost of the line of houses extending among gardens and walls all the way from Bel Air to Orleans. East of it Narciss' column was just issuing from the wood and moving against the railway embankment.

With the assistance of some guns which were unlimbered along the highway the first houses were quickly stormed; but afterwards house after house had to be taken in bloody struggle from the 27th Marching Regiment, the 39th Regiment of the Line and the Foreign Legion which fought very stubbornly. Les Aides soon stood in flames. In the burning and falling houses the gallant Suabians fell upon the brave international mercenaries with butt-end and bayonet. Amidst heavy losses by both parties the brigade slowly advanced along the highway.

Meanwhile Colonel Narciss had approached the railway station of Les Aubrays; some considerable time had been expended by the enemy in strengthening this with all the art of field-fortification; almost without firing a shot, however, some companies of the 12th Regiment and of the 1st Battalion of Jägers surmounted all the obstacles and advanced against the small fortress. The doors were beaten in, and the Jägers leapt through the windows into the inner rooms and stood man to man against the Mobiles de la Nièvre. A short noiseless struggle in the narrow spaces ensued, and all who were not run through surrendered panic-struck. Colonel Narciss at once reformed his men, and at the first rush took the gas-works further south. Upon these the enemy now pours his reserves from the south; from the railway embankment and from the rear, from the southern parts of Les Aides, a surging stream of fire is poured upon the small Bavarian force. Major von Tein falls; Major von Kress and Staff-Captain Bürgel are mortally wounded. Slowly and repeatedly turning upon the enemy, Colonel Narciss gives way and collects his terribly thinned battalions in the railway station previously taken by assault. But when after 5 o'clock the 3rd Brigade, supported from the west, at last begins to take possession of the houses south of Les Aides, the Colonel leads a second assault upon the gas-works and drives out the enemy after a short resistance.

Early in the day, when the contest of the 22nd Division about Ormes was growing more and more intense, General von der Tann had moved the 1st Brigade coming along the Paris road to the left wing of the Prussian Division.

About the same hour that Colonel Narciss took the gas-works for the second time, the 1st Brigade, supported on the right by the 32nd Regiment, stormed the railway embankment at the northern extremity of the suburb of St. Jean. Determined to lose no time in making use of this success, the Chief of the Staff of the Bavarian Corps led the 1st Bavarian Regiment, which was just at hand, with bands playing, through this suburb towards the very centre of Orleans. Dusk had already set in when the head of the regiment stood before the closed octroy barriers. A short rapid fire of the French and a short check of the Bavarians is succeeded by a forward rush of the latter, led by the wounded Major Lünenschloss and the officers of the leading companies; some side-gates are burst in, and the street, lately the scene of a roaring combat, lies in the darkness silent and deserted. The defenders had fled.

Simultaneously with these events some troops of the 4th Brigade had entered the city through the suburb Bannier.—At half-past six General von der Tann and Lieutenant-General von Wittich made their entry into conquered Orleans.

The exulting music of the band of the Life Guards resounded through the streets; on the Martroi square, in front of the statue of La Pucelle on horseback, blazed the bivouac-fires of the troops throwing a flickering light alternately illumining and again hiding in shadows the houses, that appeared to have been forsaken by their inhabitants. Orleans was ours. The XVth Corps of the French, the first hope of the new government had been badly hit, and hastened, covered by the darkness of the night, to Gien or through the lake district of the Sologne to La Ferté—St. Aubin. The French lost about 4000 men in killed, wounded, and prisoners, among these the Foreign Legion of 1300 men alone lost its Commanding Officer, 19 officers and 900 rank and file. The Germans lost 919 men, 380 of whom belonged to the 3rd Bavarian Brigade.

On the day following General von der Tann billeted his troops in and round Orleans. In the south, touch with the enemy was recovered in the direction of La Ferté—St. Aubin; and the cavalry reconnoitred towards the West. Contrary to the suggestions of the Commander-in-Chief of the Third Army, the General resolved not to advance immediately upon Bourges, and later events conclusively proved the justice of this resolve. Had the attack of an enormously superior force of the French overtaken the German Army at Bourges instead of Coulmiers, a great calamity might have had to be recorded in the history of the campaign, instead of a well-regulated retreat.

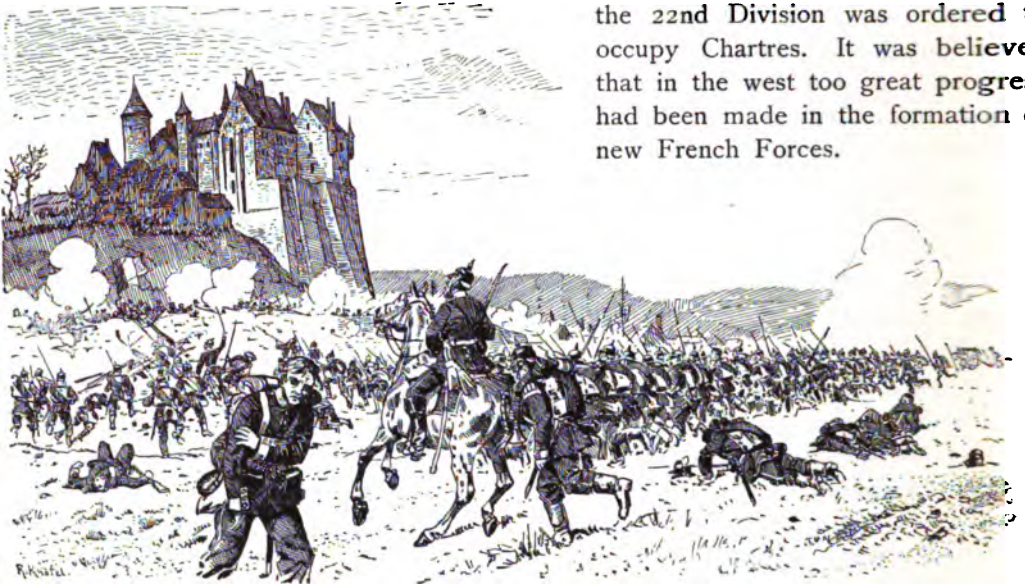
As the Commander-in-Chief was of opinion that the *mere occupation* of Orleans could be maintained even by a comparatively small force, the 22nd Division of Infantry and the 4th Division of Cavalry were ordered to clear Château-



dun and Chartres from the great numbers of Franks-tireurs who had appeared there, and then to retire into closer union with the Third Army.

On the 18th of October this Division stormed Châteaudun, which was bravely defended by the Franks-tireurs, and on the 20th Chartres was wholly surrounded, but the French garrison was, according to a capitulation, allowed to depart to the west.

In consequence of these occurrences the 22nd Division was ordered to occupy Chartres. It was believed that in the west too great progress had been made in the formation of new French Forces.



BATTLE AT CHÂTEAUDUN.

COULMIERS. ¹

Spite of all rejoicings over the victory gained, General von der Tann did not from the very beginning hide from himself the gravity and uncertainty of his position in Orleans. The official documents that had been discovered, the reports of the agents, nay, the utterances of the inhabitants of Orleans left no doubt as to the large scale of the French preparations. Of this the Germans became distinctly conscious, placed as they were at Orleans, the very fountain-head of the national insurrection. Past contests had abundantly shown that these new levies, supported as they were, by African troops and largely intermingled with a nucleus of regulars, fought bravely and resolutely, and were by no means scattered like chaff before the wind. But in these combats the principal masses of the hostile levies had by no means yet been encountered; these were, it seemed, only just assembling at Gien, and south of the Sauldre at Blois and Vendôme. If an attempt were made to attack any one of the groups separately, the next was invariably found empty, so complete and well served was the French system of espionage.

As the railway lines of the country were at the enemy's disposal, rapid move-

¹ See the events outside Paris on the 14th of November, page 293. [Trs.]

ments of his armies were quite on the *tapis* and could only with difficulty be discovered ; for as the German cavalry was inadequately equipped with fire-arms, thorough reconnoitring was rendered impossible for them by the numerous bands of *Francs-tireurs* that infested the district.

Should the enemy's forces go on accumulating at the present rate, and this could hardly be doubted, it might well happen that the small band of Bavarians might be detained by attacks from Blois or even Salbris, whilst an Army might advance northwards from Gien down the valley of the Loing and imperil the investment of Paris.

News arriving on the 18th and 19th of October that large masses were assembling round Gien lent special force to these conjectures. General von der Tann therefore asked to be allowed, if he should find himself in danger of being surrounded in his present position in Orleans, to evacuate the city, move into country more favourable than that around Orleans for the free use of cavalry and artillery. The Commander-in-Chief of the Third Army, however, wished that Orleans itself should be held as long as possible and accordingly gave orders that the 1st Bavarian Corps should remain in the city and evacuate it only in presence of greatly superior forces of the enemy. That this superiority would have to be established on the field of battle was from the first moment Von der Tann's unalterable resolve.

Meanwhile Gambetta had on the 9th of Oct. arrived in Tours, and had assumed the Ministry of War and of the Interior. This extraordinary man succeeded in inspiring the Military and Civil Authorities, who were much disheartened by the disasters of the 10th and 11th of October, with new courage and in imbuing them with his unshaken faith in the ultimate victory of his country. First of all D'Aurelle de Paladines

was appointed in place of De la Motterouge, and the whole XVth Corps was assembled on the Sauldre between Argent and Salbris. By the 17th of October this corps had already attained a strength of 60,000 men and was visibly gaining in military efficiency. At the same time the formation of a XVIth Corps at Vendôme and Blois was progressing to completion. Strong bodies of *Francs-tireurs* and *Gardes Mobiles* formed a screen, extending from Cloyes past Morée and the northern and eastern edges of the forest of Marchénoir as far as the Loire near Mer ; this screen was impenetrable to the German cavalry, and behind it the forces could be organized without disturbance. The addition of a XVIIth and an XVIIIth Corps was also in hand, but their employment could not as yet be reckoned upon.

Lately the French had formed all sorts of wild plans for the relief of Paris. Finally, on the 24th of October the Generals, in a Council of War at Salbris, Freycinet also being present, agreed upon the most natural plan, viz., first to inflict a defeat



GENERAL D'AURELLE DE PALADINES.



BAVARIAN CUIRASSIER.

on the Bavarians in Orleans and then to convert the re-conquered city into a strongly fortified camp, where the great army for the relief of Paris might assemble. For that purpose the XVth Corps, with the exception of Des Pallières' Division, was to be moved up from Salbris to Blois, then the XVth and XVIth Corps were jointly to surround Orleans from the west and the north, whilst Des Pallières' Division was to cross the Loire at Gien and to close up the ring round the Bavarians from the east. Not by any means a bad plan, 120,000 men being available for its execution and only a small handful of enemies having to be crushed, who were far inferior in numbers even to Pallières' small column alone.

They overlooked, however, that the mobility of newly formed troops is such as only to admit of the simplest manœuvres, and that General von der Tann had no intention whatever of allowing himself and his Bavarians to be caught in a mouse-trap. On the contrary, the old veteran's temper increased in ferocity in proportion as danger approached nearer; he determined to fall on the French Corps like a thunderbolt wheresoever and whensoever he could tackle them.

But it was just this "Where and When" that constituted his perplexity. What so far was known of the enemy consisted of rumours and conjectures rather than reliable knowledge. A sultry bodeful atmosphere was brooding over Orleans; hatred mingled with jeerings and veiled threats, found open expression in a manner which is familiar to those who have lived amidst a hostile population at the approach of a crisis; but the danger, though real, was impalpable.

The 2nd Division of Cavalry did its utmost to dissipate the uncertainty; and by the beginning of November it had ascertained with some degree of certainty, that the principal danger was threatening from the west. Troops of the line had been seen

at Mer, by the forest of Marchenoir, at Morée and Verdes; ¹ the population of that district manifested its hostility with increasing intensity, and many a young German horseman bled to death from bullets basely fired from some safe ambush. It was an obvious temptation to advance with a strong force against Blois or Vendôme, but whence could an adequate force be drawn without imperilling the possession of Orleans? This town, however, had to be retained under all circumstances—that had become a point of honour—at least, till a crushing superiority of numbers had been proved to exist.

On the 7th of November a detachment of the 2nd Division of Cavalry reinforced by the Brigade of Bavarian Cuirassiers and 5½ companies of Bavarian Infantry moved via Chantôme to the entrance of the forest at St. Laurent-des-Bois. After a short fight with the advanced troops, a great part of Bourdillon's Brigade of the French XVIth Corps suddenly issued out of the wood with artillery and mitrailleuses and at the same time hostile cavalry and artillery made its appearance in the north. Only with heavy loss was our infantry able to terminate the contest against the at least eightfold superior numbers of the enemy. This combat, as well as the report that D'Aurelle de Paladines had moved his Head-Quarters to Mer, removed all doubt about the direction whence to expect the enemy's attack. Moreover, the reports coming in on the following day, the 8th of November, established beyond doubt, that the masses had been set in motion and on the 9th might be within touch.

The French were now actually on the point of carrying out the plan described above; hitherto its execution had been delayed by numerous misapprehensions and hesitations. Especially after it became known that Metz had capitulated on the 27th of October neither D'Aurelle de Paladines, nor Borel, the Chief of his Staff, would venture to attack Orleans. They estimated that the German force assembled there amounted to 50,000 men, and it required the express orders of Freycinet, who belonged to the government as a kind of Under-Secretary of State for War to Gambetta, for the interrupted movements to be taken up again.

The whole French scheme of operations was rather intricate. Pallières' Division was to begin its march from Argent through Gien as early as the 7th; General Faye and Cathelineau, the Commander of the Francs-tireurs, were charged with the light task of advancing with about 15,000 men from Salbris straight upon Orleans; then on the 8th of November the mass of the Army was to be set in motion from the neighbourhood of Marchenoir. They hoped thus to surround Orleans on the 10th from all sides and to destroy the Bavarians on the 11th. Moreover, in order to draw off the attention of the 22nd Division, which the French knew to be posted at Chartres, from the decisive point, General Fiereck was ordered to carry out a feint with his troops from Le Mans.

The magnitude of the forces set in motion left really nothing to be desired. On the evening of the 16th the XVth Corps camped at Messas, Cravant and Villermain; the XVIth in and south of Ouzouer-le-Marché, and two Divisions of Cavalry between Ouzouer and Prénouvellon. In front of the left wing of the Army, screening it and reaching northwards far beyond it, numerous bodies of Francs-tireurs were encamped from south of Charsonville as far as Villampuy on the road Orleans—Châteaudun: in

¹ North of Binas, along the road Binas—Chartres.

all at least 75,000 men. To these must be added 36,000 men under General de Pallières, who arrived on the evening of the 8th at Chateauneuf-sur-Loire in the south-east, and 15,000 men under General Faye who had left Salbris and were advancing upon La Motte-Beuvron.

Altogether a force of 125,000 men was coming down upon Von der Tann's Corps, and in such a manner that on the 8th the wings of the French hosts already seriously threatened the line of retreat of the Bavarians.

But General von der Tann by no means intended to wait in Orleans till the 11th as the French plan of campaign expected him to do; as early as the 8th he resolved to go forth and meet his greatest danger, the main body of the enemy. In the night between the 8th and 9th of November his Corps was assembled south of Rosières on the road Ormes—Coulmiers; the 2nd Division of Cavalry, extending from Baccon past Coulmiers as far as St. Sigismond, formed the screen of his front and left wing; the Bavarian Cuirassiers with mounted batteries and one battalion guarded at St. Pérvy-la-Colombe the road from Châteaudun. This small band counted but 14,500 muskets, 4450 sabres and 110 guns, and their task was to prove on the following day beyond all doubt that the enemy were "greatly superior" in force. As yet, however, this could not be asserted with all certainty, and therefore General von der Tann *had not yet evacuated Orleans*. As garrison he left there the Regiment of Infantry of the Body-Guard. Ere an actual conflict had taken place at Coulmiers with the "greatly superior" enemy, no hostile force should enter the city placed under the protection of the Bavarians.

Towards 8 o'clock in the morning General von der Tann received reports from his advanced troops at Huisseau-sur-Mauve. Strong bodies of the enemy were advancing from Messas and Cravant upon Baccon, but from the neighbourhood of Charsonville nothing was reported. The direction of the enemy's attack seemed now to be fully known. The General therefore determined to repulse the onset of the enemy with his left wing between La Renardière and Château-Préfort behind the Mauve, and then at the proper moment to make an attack southwards with the right wing from Coulmiers.

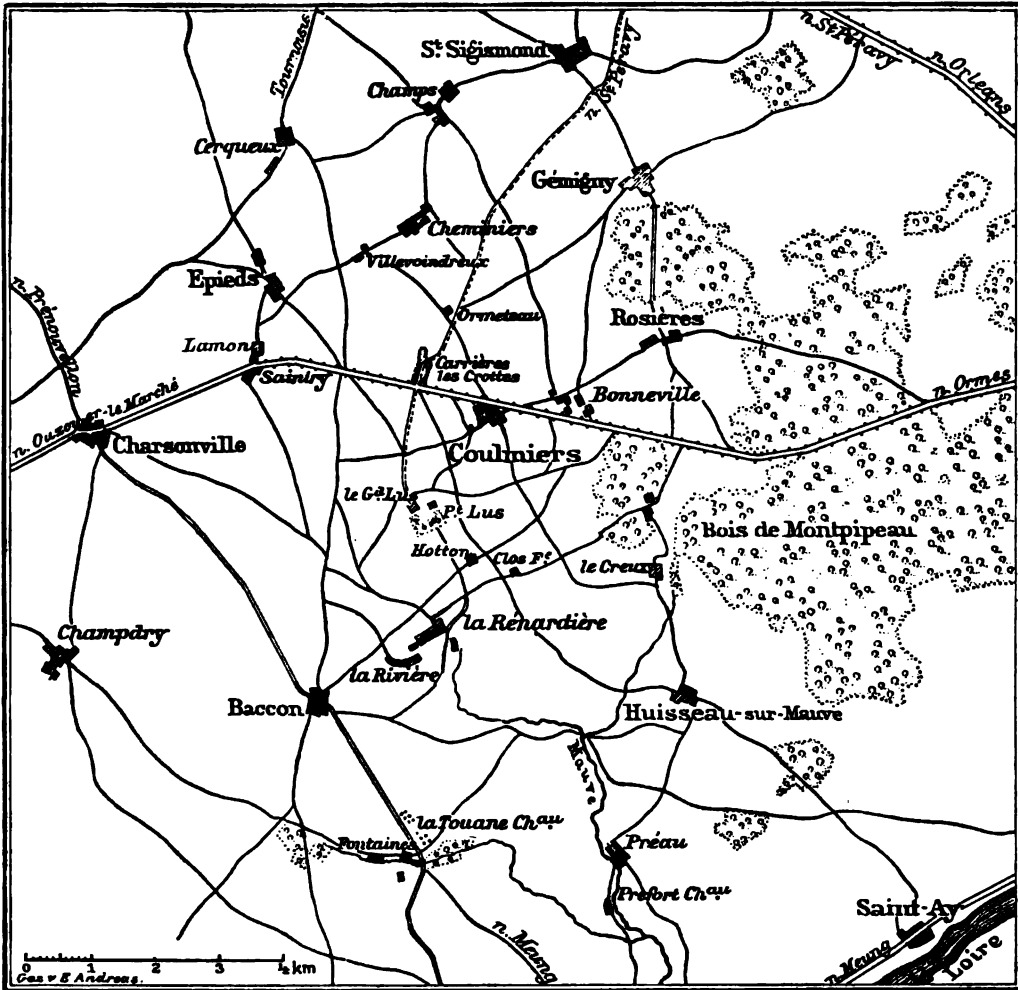
In accordance with this plan the 3rd Infantry Brigade was moved forwards towards Château-Préfort, the 1st came up to La Renardière, and the rest of the Corps was to remain on the road south of Rosières, in reserve. But meanwhile Lieutenant-Colonel Muck, the staff officer of the 2nd Division, had caused the 4th Brigade and 3 batteries to occupy Ormeteau, Carrières-les-Crottes and Coulmiers and prepare these places for defence, as an advance of hostile forces through Charsonville had appeared to him to be becoming more and more probable.

At 10 o'clock the first shot was fired at Baccon by the mounted battery of the 2nd Division of Cavalry, against the French columns advancing from Cravant. At the same time positive information arrived that large bodies of the enemy were approaching Coulmiers from the direction of Charsonville.

In fact the French Army had been on the move ever since 8 o'clock in the morning. The XVth Corps, had orders to cover its right by one brigade (Rebillard), and to take Baccon and La Renardière with Peytavin's Division, Dariés' Brigade and the Reserve Artillery. The right wing of the XVIth Corps was to attack Coulmiers

from the direction of Ouzouer; its left wing prolonged by 9 Regiments of Cavalry and swarms of Francs-tireurs was to outflank the German right wing from the north and cut off the retreat of the Bavarians upon St. Péray.

At 10.30 Peytavin's Division arrived in front of Baccon, which was held by only one battalion of Bavarian Jägers with the two mounted batteries of the Division of



COULMIERS.

Cavalry. Five batteries open fire, but it is 11 o'clock ere the brave battalion quits the place in order to at once renew its resistance at La Rivière. The Division had to fight for another hour ere it could take this village also from the Jägers.

It was now 12 o'clock and Peytavin had but just arrived before of La Renardière, the real stronghold of the 1st Bavarian Brigade (3 battalions, 2 batteries). Rebillard's Brigade, the right wing of the French, had meanwhile arrived south of La Touane

Château, but there it remained inactive, whilst the 3rd Bavarian Brigade prepared Préfort Château for defence.

On the right wing also only initiatory contests had taken place up to midday. The 2nd Division of the XVIth Corps, advancing from Saintry against the front of the 4th Bavarian Brigade, had indeed had its advance arrested, but the Bavarians could distinctly perceive the outflanking columns of the enemy coming through Epieds towards Cheminiers. Just then (11 o'clock) General von der Tann arrived at Coulmiers; he was faced by the momentous necessity of bringing into action at this early hour the last Reserve of his Corps, the 2nd Brigade (Orff; 4 battalions, 4 batteries), and sending it from Bonneville in the direction of Champs to prolong his right wing.

The intentions of the enemy were obvious and gave enough cause for anxiety. The right was the critical point and every available man must be employed there. This was also the opinion of General von der Tann, and he recalled the 3rd Brigade from Château Préfort, (12 o'clock). It was, however, impossible to bring this brigade into action before 3 o'clock, either at La Renardière or at Coulmiers. If the enemy succeeded before that time in driving our feeble battalions out of Coulmiers, or if he were able to crush the 2nd Brigade, the Bavarian Corps would be forced to fall back upon Ormes, where it would fall into the hands of General Pallières. It was an awkward position; every one of us anxiously asked himself, when will those heavy black masses now standing motionless at Saintry be set in movement?

In those moments, when torturing anxiety with iron grip lays hold of the Commander, and everybody else feels that he with his little destiny is feebly and helplessly delivered over to the dread rule of a mysterious Fate, then Von der Tann approved himself a true ruler of the field of battle. A bright, almost cheerful expression lit up his features, his countenance did not betray a trace of anxiety to those around him as the French shells, howling, burst near them. He exchanged a few eager words with General von Orff, who with gleaming eyes and glowing with the fire of conflict reported to him the departure of his brigade in the direction of Champs. Then turning to the Chief of his General Staff, he said with a soft voice and a smile: "Those fellows over there will make the acquaintance of our Orff."

But let us again turn to La Renardière. Only after bloody contests and not till the enemy had begun to surround the village from the east did the three battalions of the 1st Brigade evacuate the castle and the park, and return, after an intermediate halt at Clos-Ferme, unpursued to the wood of Montpipeau, the south-western edge of which they occupied (at 3 o'clock). About the same time the 3rd Brigade had also arrived there from Château Préfort, and 3 of its battalions joined in the defence of the wood. The employment of the remaining three battalions remained dependent on the progress of the decisive contest at Coulmiers.

Coulmiers was held by the 2nd and 3rd battalions of the 13th Regt.; behind these stood the 2nd of the 10th; the 7th Jäger and the 3rd battalion of the 10th defended Ormeteau. One battery stood in the park, and one south-east of Coulmiers, and three batteries between Coulmiers and Ormeteau. This small body counted only 3500 muskets and 30 guns. The first attack of Barry's Division began at about 1.30. After a protracted artillery-fire at long range the 1st Brigade, consisting of six battalions, made a rush upon Carrières-les-Crottes, which the Bavarians had evacuated, and upon Coulmiers. The assault is repulsed and the fleeing brigade crowds into

the quarries of Les Crottes. But our 4th Brigade has been compelled to send forward its last battalion (2nd/10th) into the park of Coulmiers.

The enemy now increases his artillery fire. At 3 o'clock he delivers his second assault upon Coulmiers, threatening also the south side of the park. It is all in vain; the 22nd Regiment of Gardes Mobiles turns back in wild flight and is speedily followed by the 31st Marching Regiment, which has left its Commanding Officer on the field. Our 13th Regiment is in high glee and greets with exulting applause Baumüller's Battery, which sends its shells after the fleeing foe. Only ammunition began to run short.

Meanwhile Orff's Brigade had, further to the right, joined issue with Jauréguiberry's Division, which was surprised by Orff's attack, just as it had deployed its 1st Brigade and Artillery between Cheminiers and Champs. Hopeless panic seized Deplanque's Brigade, when the four feeble Bavarian Battalions rushed up with deafening hurrahs, and at the same time the mounted batteries of the Brigade of Cuirassiers cannonaded Champs from the north-east. The 37th Marching Regiment decamps, full speed, from Champs and the panic spreads as far as Cheminiers, but at the last moment the seven battalions of Bourdillon's Brigade occupy the place abandoned by the fugitives.

In the face of these masses of fresh troops General von Orff declines to continue the attack, which no longer held out any prospect of success. Unfavourable reports from Coulmiers confirm him in his resolve. There, where his brigade stands, it shall remain, a permanent menace to the enemy, a protection to his own corps against being surrounded from the north.

Meanwhile the issue of the battle had been decided at Coulmiers. Heavy batteries of the enemy had been planted at Grand-Lus, and jointly with the artillery posted at Saintry and Villevoindreux they overwhelmed village and park with a destructive cross-fire. General Barry had strained every nerve to urge his faltering Mobiles to renew the attack. Companies of the Line were placed at the head of the battalions of Mobiles, Daries' Brigade of the XVth Corps was called up from La Renardière, to attack Coulmiers from the south. This huge mass, 22 battalions,¹ was set in motion at about half-past three.

Its first attack was brilliantly repulsed. The first line of Barry's Division had indeed



GENERAL V. ORFF.

¹ Lehaucourt, Campagne de Loire, 145 and Appendix I. Grenest, L'armée de la Loire, reports in detail the losses of all the regiments of Daries' Brigade, which alone numbered 10 battalions, inclusive of 7 battalions of the Line.

penetrated into the park, but the 1st battalion of the 12th Regiment (3rd Brigade) came up at the double and ejected them with the bayonet. The flight of the troops of the Line was infectious. General Barry dismounts, draws his sword, and being determined to make a last desperate attempt, he places himself at the head of the Mobiles. He succeeds in arresting the flight of his men and induces them to turn about, the firing from Coulmiers having ceased. The French once more advancing find the place empty.

General von der Tann had proved beyond all possible dispute that he was confronted by a force of crushing superiority. The battle might perhaps have been still protracted, but on the morrow it would no doubt be renewed under far more unpropitious circumstances, as Pallières' Division and Faye's troops were hurrying up from the east and from the south, whilst the nearest German reinforcement, the 22nd Division, was only just arriving at Voves, 25 miles from Coulmiers. Every moment Jauréguiberry's 13 battalions might awake from their torpor, run down Orff's four feeble battalions and seize the line of retreat through St. Péravy.

Accordingly orders were given for a retreat. The 3rd Brigade, the 5th Prussian Brigade of Cavalry, and the Brigade of Cuirassiers between St. Sigismond and Gémigny, covered the movement of the Corps on Artenay, and the retreat was executed in good order, the Infantry Regiment of Life-guards also arrived at Artenay. Marching by St. Ay ¹ upon Château-Préfort, it had recognised the changed situation and escaped the impending danger by a forced march upon Cercottes.

The French, greatly shaken, did not attempt to pursue them. Reyaus' nine cavalry regiments had, during their ride to St. Sigismond, received a couple of shells from the batteries of the Brigade of Cuirassiers, then mistaken the French Francs-tireurs at Tournois for German troops, and hastened back with all speed to Prénouvellon. Later French historians assert that this cavalry might have destroyed the Bavarians, but it may well be answered that the 2nd Division of Cavalry and our Cuirassiers would have shown the French cavalry the way to Prénouvellon even more effectually than the mounted batteries succeeded in doing.

The French state their losses to have amounted to 1500 men; the Germans lost 46 officers and 530 rank and file killed and wounded. The French, moreover, made 800 ² prisoners, captured a column of ammunition with two guns of the reserve. The result of the battle was tactically unfavourable; strategically it furnished complete information about the newly-formed French Army of the Loire, and crippled its aggressive power for a long time to come.

On the evening of the 10th of November the 1st Bavarian Corps stood round Toury in full fighting trim, the 22nd Division had arrived at Janville, the 2nd Division of Cavalry was in observation on the left, the 4th on the right.

EXPEDITION OF THE GRAND DUKE OF MECKLENBURG INTO LE PERCHE. ³

The First and Second German Armies set free by the fall of Metz had, on the 23rd of October, already received instructions from the Great Head Quarters con-

¹ On the road Orleans—Beaugency.

² These included 450 sick and wounded in the hospitals of Orleans, 83 were with the ammunition-column and 74 were left behind in the night march of the Life Guards.

³ "Le Perche" is a hilly district in the south of Normandy; in it rise the important northern tributary of the Loire, the Sarthe, and its tributary the Loir. [*Trs.*]

cerning their future operations. The aim was with these forces to repress energetically the creation of new French forces over a wide region. The First Army was to take charge of the north of France; the Second was to advance in the general direction via Troyes to the Middle Loire, at first with three Corps (IIIrd, IXth, and Xth) and the 1st Division of Cavalry. The Second Army began its march immediately after the capitulation; on the 10th of November the 1st Division of Cavalry of the IXth Corps stood near Troyes, the IIIrd Corps was at Vendevre and Clairvaux and the Xth at Chaumont.

By thus sending considerable forces towards the Middle-Loire the Germans had



THE GRAND DUKE FREDERICK FRANCIS OF MECKLENBURG-SCHWERIN.

thought to effectually prevent any molestation of their investing Army before Paris, coming from the neighbourhood of Orleans. But of late there had been numerous indications that the French rulers were planning attempts at relief from the west or south-west. A hostile blow from that quarter would be dealt on important points of the line of investment, and at the same time avoid a collision with the German reinforcements arriving from Metz.

To meet this danger betimes and with a complete army-corps a new Army Section was formed on the 7th of November, that is *before* the battle of Coulmiers, under the command of Grand Duke Frederick Francis of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. It consisted of the 17th Division, which up to then had formed part of the Army before Paris, the

22nd Division, the 1st Bavarian Corps and the 2nd, 4th and 6th Divisions of Cavalry. It was ordered to be on the 12th of November between Chartres and Bonneval, and to hold Orleans with but small forces.

The result of the battle of Coulmiers, and the knowledge that a very strong French Army in fighting trim was even then assembled round Orleans, caused an alteration both in the destination of the Second Army and in the arrangements for the place of concentration of the Army Section. The Second Army received orders on the 10th of November to hasten its westward march, so that its IXth Corps should reach Fontainebleau by the 14th of November. The Army Section was to effect a close concentration round Toury and Angerville, and until the arrival of the Second Army it had also to furnish security towards the south and west.



LIEUT.-COLONEL GRAF V. WALDERSEE.
(Chief of the General Staff of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg.)

On the 13th the Grand Duke moved his quarters to Chartres, whence good communications existed with the roads from Orleans, and also with those from Le Mans, to Paris. The 2nd Division of Cavalry remained at Toury, fronting south; the 4th reconnoitred from Voves towards the south-west, and the 6th from Chartres towards the west and north-west.

When on the 14th the IXth Army Corps arrived at Fontainebleau, it was left to the Second Army, to which the 2nd Cavalry Division was added, to provide security in the direction of Orleans. Now the Army Section had solely to afford protection towards the west.

After the battle of Coulmiers public opinion in France urged on the most fantastic plans, having as their culminating point the immediate relief of Paris; to the Generals, however, and preëminently to d'Aurelle, affairs appeared in a less rosy light, and they expected a German attack every moment. The delegation at Tours at first sided with the Generals and adhered to the plan formed at Salbris, viz., to convert Orleans into a fortified camp and to assemble there a large army. Only General Chanzy raised cogent objections and suggested the neighbourhood of Chartres as the place of assembly for the new army. There the advancing columns of the Second German Army would be avoided, and greater freedom of movement was possible than at Orleans, where, in case of retreat the Loire might become a source of danger. It has already been mentioned that the German Commanders too had taken Chanzy's views into account, and we shall see how the Grand Duke kept recurring to them.

D'Aurelle's plan carried the day, and the French set to work making entrenchments at the edges of the forest of Orleans. A newly formed XVIIth Corps was brought to Marchenoir, and the creation of an XVIIIth Corps at Gien and of the XXIst at Châteaudun was taken in hand. About 35,000 men, consisting of Mobiles, Francs-tireurs and a few already disposable line-battalions of the XXIst Corps, formed the so-called Army of the West, under General Fiereck, the divisional commander of the recruiting district around Le Mans. About the middle of November this Army of the West distributed along a line upwards of 60 miles long, from Pacy-sur-Eure, near Evreux, as far as Bonneval on the Loir. ¹ Its principal posts, Dreux, Senonches, La Loupe and Bonneval, were each held by five or six battalions, in front of which swarmed clouds of Francs-tireurs, who occupied all the larger villages, all the defiles and bridges of the country, and exhibited a restless activity, being well supported by the inhabitants.

The district was suitable for a guerilla warfare, being wholly unlike the Beauce. Woodlands are less rare, the unevenness of the ground is more strongly pronounced; growing hedges, banks and hollow roads cross the country in every direction. The numerous water-courses cut deep into the ground, and strongly-built houses and fortress-like castles of the nobles of Le Perche offer excellent *points-d'appui* for defence.

The German Army Section had now the task of marching into Le Perche against Fiereck's array of troops. It could never ascertain how large a hostile force was opposed to it, but turn whither it might, it always encountered the enemy. Considerable successes were impossible, because large masses were nowhere assembled and the small bodies could, owing to the favourable nature of the country and the early winter-evenings, always withdraw before any really decisive result had been attained. Always on the move, now marching in a drifting snow-storm and again through deep slushy soil; passing one night in a bitter-cold bivouac and the next in crowded quarters, from which the enemy had only just been driven out, without gaining any great victory to quicken body and mind, but on the contrary with a depressing sense of aimless exertion; such were the circumstances in which the Germans had to march through Le Perche. This was the impression at the time, but the troops were unable to perceive the great results gained by these efforts,—nay, even history did not appreciate it for some decades to come.

At first it seemed that forces of the enemy were assembling at Dreux, and on the 17th the Grand Duke moved there with the 17th Division, against General du Temple with his eight battalions of Mobiles and four companies of Marine Fusiliers. After some insignificant engagements of the advanced troops, the French evacuated their positions at nightfall and dispersed in wild flight in the direction of Brezolles. Further south, in the neighbourhood of Châteauneuf-en-Thimerais, the 22nd Division encountered the Detachment from Senonches (about eight battalions), which was on the march to Dreux. The French did not make any stand whatever, but decamped to the west, and the panic spread all the way to Châteaudun. General Fiereck quickly betook himself thence with his troops of the XXIst Corps to Nogent-le-Rotrou; he was replaced in his command by Captain Jaurès of the Navy.

The Grand Duke having perceived that there were no considerable forces on the

¹ A tributary of the Sarthe flowing into the Loire. [*Trs.*]

Eure, determined to advance upon Le Mans, the base of the forces of national defence in the west. In the execution of this plan the Army Section advanced amidst incessant contests, and arrived on the 21st of November on both sides of the Huisne, in immediate neighbourhood of Nogent-le-Rotrou. Here were assembled the remnants of the bodies already defeated and the other available troops of the XXIst Corps. But their appearance so disheartened Jaurès that he moved his troops with utmost speed to Le Mans; this march degenerated into a disastrous flight; the infantry hurried back as far as Conlie, and even there it required the forcible intervention of cavalry and artillery to arrest their flight. The XXIst Corps was broken in fragments and was of no account in the subsequent actions before Orleans. As we shall be told further on, even in the days of Beaugency they had not yet recovered from the after-effects of this really baseless panic.

On the 22nd the Grand Duke found Nogent evacuated, and nobody was aware of the great success he had gained. Continuing his march upon Le Mans, he received orders on the 23rd from Head-Quarters to march at once upon Beaugency, thus to turn off to the south-east. It had been discovered at Head-Quarters that the whole Army of the Loire was posted north of Orleans, and in such force that the Second German Army by itself could not hope to gain decisive successes. The Army Section should therefore in the expected crisis, which was fast approaching, fall upon the left flank and the rear of the Army of the Loire.

On the 24th the march in the new direction was entered upon, but meanwhile the state of affairs on the French side had undergone a complete change. The expedition of the Grand Duke in the direction of Le Mans and Tours had given a great fright to the delegation in Tours, and they gladly acceded to the plan of General de Sonis, the General in Command, to advance with the XVIIth Corps, now fully formed, from the neighbourhood of Marchenoir, via Châteaudun, against the road Brou—Nogent-le-Rotrou—Le Mans, and thus come upon the communications of the German Army Section.

On the evening of the 24th the XVIIth Corps, with the exception of a brigade that had been sent to Vendôme, stood assembled near Châteaudun, intending next day to continue the march via Brou. Accordingly, whilst the German Army Section, was on the 25th moving upon Blois and its leading troops had reached Mont-Doubleau, De Sonis' advanced guard encountered at Brou the 4th Division of Cavalry and trains of the German Army Section. From this the Grand Duke justly inferred that considerable forces of the enemy had inserted themselves between him and the Second Army, and he resolved to fall upon them before continuing his march upon Beaugency.

On the 26th the Army Section arrived on the line Courtalin—Brou, but the enemy had disappeared. De Sonis had received timely notice of the altered direction of the enemy's march and quickly decamped. His retreat to Marchenoir amounted almost to a collapse of his army; thousands of stragglers covered the roads, and for days afterwards the country was swarming with fugitives; to Beaugency alone 3000 men of all arms had strayed. The discipline and organisation of the XVIIth Corps was deeply shaken; the results of this success also did not become perceptible to the Army Section until the 2nd of December. At first it simply seemed vexatious to have struck the empty air and have allowed one's-self to be called off from the prescribed line of march, just at a moment when the Great Head Quarters laid the greatest stress on acceleration of the movements.

On the 27th the German Army Section arrived in the neighbourhood of Bonneval and rested here on the 28th. On the 25th it had been subordinated to the Second Army and was thus dependent on orders from Prince Frederick Charles.

During these November days it became painfully evident that this was a real war of the people. No enemy that can be got at, perpetual change of aim and purpose, unutterable toil and torturing uncertainty about the state of things; successes, which indeed shatter the slack organisations of the enemy, are gained, but in such a way as neither to afford clear knowledge to the Commanders, nor gratifying compensation to the men for their toils. Everyone of us who shared in the labours and sufferings of these days will confess that they were gloomy hours, gloomier than in many a great battle. They put to the test our tenacity and the innermost organisation of the troops.

But as the central figure in our reminiscences of those days, stands out the tall manly form of our Princely Leader, the true German soldier-duke, Frederick Francis.

THE SECOND ARMY AND THE BATTLE OF BEAUNE-LA-ROLANDE.

We have already stated above, that the Second Army marched west from Troyes and that on the 14th of November its IXth Corps reached Fontainebleau and afterwards Angerville. The IIIrd and the Xth Corps were as yet far behind, but during the following days they hastened forward towards the Loing, spite of the numerous obstacles put in their way by the wildly excited population. On the 20th of November the IIIrd Corps was assembled round Pithiviers and Boynes. Towards the west it had established communication with the 1st Division of Cavalry, which jointly with the 2nd Division of Cavalry encamped at Toury, was reconnoitring on the east of the high-road Paris—Orleans, the country to the immediate north of Orleans. These portions of the Second Army had only had trifling collisions with the Franks-tireurs. On the 21st the heads of the Xth Corps, which numbered only three brigades, reached Montargis, where they were awaited by six Hessian Squadrons of the IXth Corps that had been sent to reinforce them.

Meanwhile reconnaissances carried out with great energy had brought startling reports. The French Army of the Loire was beyond all doubt much stronger than had been suspected. It was found that the whole northern edge of the forest of Orleans from Artenay as far as Beaune-la-Rolande was strongly occupied and entrenched; French troops were posted as far west as beyond Orgères, and on the east very considerable forces were said to be on the march from Gien upon Montargis; in fact as early as the 23rd the cavalry of the Xth Corps lighted upon French infantry of the Line at Bellegarde. On the 24th the German 37th Brigade of Infantry was ordered to advance to Beaune-la-Rolande from Montargis by way of Ladon, the 39th by way of Panne. The former encountered the enemy at Ladon, the latter at Maizières. He speedily gave way, but for all that shewed the presence there of considerable forces of the XXth Corps

The reports of the preceding days had already induced Prince Frederick Charles to give up any idea of acting on the offensive with his Army alone and to await the arrival of the Army Section which had been ordered up towards Janville. The latest events pointed to an advance of the French forces upon Pithiviers, and they seemed

more than a match for the three brigades of the Xth Corps at Beaune-la-Rolande. The Commander-in-Chief of the Army therefore resolved on the 27th to move the 5th Infantry Division of the IIIrd Corps from Pithiviers to near Boynes and Barville, where since the 25th the 1st Division of Cavalry had also been stationed.

The attack of the French upon the Xth Corps was, however, delivered earlier and with greater forces than had been anticipated.

The sensible resolve of D'Aurelles was to quietly assemble the remaining portions of the Army of the Loire under cover of the XVth and XVIth Corps, which had been pushed forward into the forest of Orleans; then to work at their military training and to accustom them to warlike discipline and the use of arms; and lastly,



GENERAL V. VOIGTS-RHEETZ.

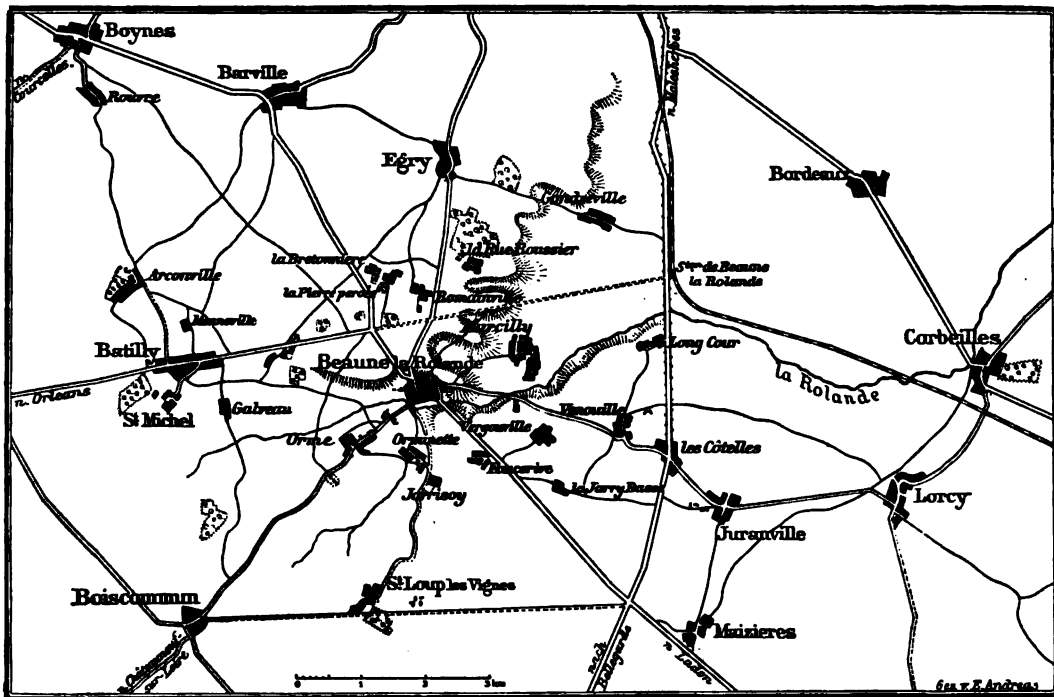
as these young troops, though filled with lofty patriotic ardour, were little fitted to execute large and dangerous offensive movements, to await the assault of the Germans in entrenched positions. But unfortunately for him the delegation of Tours, in its feverish haste, relished these plans less every day.

Gambetta, ignorant of the immense difficulties which beset the movements of such huge masses, kept urging them on with the catchword: "Paris is famishing". Spite of his excellent qualities D'Aurelles was not the man to venture on a public quarrel with the hugely popular and gifted tribune of the people, albeit that he held in his hands the real power, the Army. Already on the 23rd orders had been sent from Tours direct, ignoring D'Aurelles' authority, to concentrate the XXth Corps at Bois-Commun and Bellegarde, and this had led to the

collisions at Ladon and Maizières. Immediately afterwards the XVIIIth Corps also advanced on Ladon. Both Corps were placed under the command of General Crouzat, and on the 26th again received from Tours direct the very questionable order to initiate the intended attack of the Army of the Loire upon Pithiviers by the capture of Beaune-la-Rolande.

Accordingly on the evening of the 27th the XXth Corps was assembled at Bois-Commun and St. Loup, and the XVIIIth round Maizières. On the day following the whole mass of 60,000 men with 138 guns was to be set in motion to envelop and crush the small body of the Xth Corps hardly numbering 9000 muskets and 70 guns. It might not turn out a very easy task after all, for although in the French camp there were assembled in patriotic ardour the valiant sons of the Savoy Alps

and of the Pyrenees, the hot-blooded men of Vaucluse and Ardèche, of Herault and Haute-Garonne, over there round Beaune the clear-sighted and bold leader Voigts-Rheetz was on the watch, and with him his steadfast Westphalians, Hanoverians, Brunswickers and East-Frisians; taciturn men trained in iron discipline and reared in stern discharge of duty; death-defiant and full of confidence through their past victories. And further on at Pithiviers, about 12 miles off it is true, stood the Brandenburgers of the 5th Division under the leadership of the intrepid hero Alvensleben; he and his Brandenburgers were deeply indebted to the Xth Corps for timely help at Mars-la-Tours and Vionville, and this debt they would surely pay, so soon as the thunder of artillery from the south should give the signal for battle.



BEAUNE-LA-ROLANDE.

3 km. = 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ Engl. miles.

On the morning of the 28th of November the 38th Brigade stood at Beaune, viz., the 16th Regiment in the town itself and the 57th forming outposts from Batilly past Orme as far as south of Venouille. At Les Côtelles four battalions of the 39th Brigade were assembling, their outposts (I/56, I/79) being extended from Jarry-Basse, past Lorcy, as far as Corbeilles. The latter place was held by the 10th Jägers; the 37th Brigade and the Corps Artillery had been ordered at daybreak to assemble at Marcilly. Beaune, which had been put in a state of defence, and the hills extending east and west of it, and also the ridge south of Long-Cour constituted the main position of the Germans. General Crouzat intended to encircle Beaune with his XXth Corps from the west and the south, whilst the XVIIIth Corps would attack the eastern side of the little town by way of Juranville.

At about 9 o'clock the troops of the weak foremost lines of the German outposts attacked by the united Brigades of Robert and Bonnet of the XVIIIth Corps were compelled to evacuate Juranville and Lorcy, but with the reserves of the outposts they were able to hold Les Côtelles and Corbeilles. Against the latter place, held by six Prussian companies, Bonnet's Brigade came pouring down; but all the efforts of their dense swarms of skirmishers were unavailing against the fire at short range of the 10th Jägers and the men of the 79th.

Not till 12.30, when Bonnet began to encircle the village from the east, was it evacuated by this handful of men, whom the Commander-in-Chief now placed in the main line of defence near Long-Cour. (1.30 p.m.)

Meanwhile the 56th Regiment had made repeated attempts from Les Côtelles to recapture Juranville from the enormously superior forces of the enemy. The first houses were taken in bloody fights, and when a battalion of the 37th Brigade (F/91) came to their assistance Robert's Brigade was ejected altogether with heavy loss, and Juranville was in the hands of the Prussians. But neither here nor at Corbeilles did the Commander-in-Chief intend the battle to be decided; accordingly Juranville was once more evacuated, and its garrison was also assembled south of Long-Cour. At Les Côtelles a German gun, deeply immersed in mire, had to be left in the hands of the pursuing enemy.

The French Brigades had been much shaken by the hard-fought struggles with German outposts, still they continued till dusk making attempts to attack the main German position at Long-Cour; all these, however, were repulsed by the artillery alone.

Meanwhile at Beaune-la-Rolande a battle had been fought, which worthily is classed with the noblest deeds in military history. The widely extended companies of the 57th Regiment, which here formed the outposts, had been compelled in the hours of the forenoon to give way to the XXth Corps. Attacked on all sides with overwhelming superiority of numbers they were ordered by Major-General von Woyna, the commander of the 38th Brigade of Infantry, to retire, passing east and west of Beaune, and to assemble at La Rue-Boussier.

In Beaune itself, at 1 o'clock, there were shut in from nearly all sides, eleven companies of the 16th Regiment and two companies of the 57th. The little town is narrowly built and seems ill fitted for a protracted defence. Its southern side indeed was blocked by a wall 6 to 10 ft. high, in front of which the small river Rolande, at a distance of 80 to 200 yards, presents a moderate obstacle, but on all other sides the place is open and overlooked by the rising grounds which encircle the little town. Moreover, the surrounding country to the south was so much enclosed as to entirely prevent the concentration and advance of the enemy being observed. In the west the hill-shaped churchyard juts out like a bastion and offers with its strong walls, about 5 ft. high, a strong, but limited defensive position. A group of lime-kilns extends from the north-eastern edge of the town in the direction of the flat-topped knoll which is considerably raised above the neighbouring ground and is known as as Les Roches; these lime-kilns offer in the east advantages similar to those of the churchyard in the west. Beaune, the churchyard and the lime-kilns could all be played upon by the enemy's artillery, and the defenders had not so much as a single gun wherewith to reply.

One resource the defenders possessed, which no adverse circumstances could

deprive them of, viz., the firm resolve of their commanders to conquer or to die, and the obedience and never-shaken discipline and iron constancy of these troops of Plattdeutsch blood.

The artillery fire of the enemy upon Beaune had begun whilst the 57th Regiment was still in process of being driven back, and it increased in intensity up to half-past eleven. About that time the Brigades of Brisac and Vivenot (XXth Corps) began their attack upon the churchyard and the south-west front. In the churchyard Captain Feige was in command of about four companies of the 16th and 57th Regiments; on the south-west front about three companies of the 16th were engaged under the command of Captain von Natzmer. The companies were very weak and had no ammunition except what they carried in their pouches.

The mighty masses of the French, altogether about eleven battalions, stormed with great resolution, but were repulsed by the fire of the defenders, controlled and delivered with exemplary coolness, (11.30). Now 30 guns concentrated their fire upon the churchyard. Covered behind the wall, like a breastwork, and behind grave-stones, the brave Westphalians received the hail of iron rattling in upon them from the south and the west and finally also from the north. The walls were shattered to dust, the grave-stones tumbled over, the keeper's house was a heap of ruins, clods of earth and fragments of stone choked up the narrow place.

At half-past one the second assault was delivered. The closely arrayed French battalions followed on the heels of the line of skirmishers; the defenders were but scantily supplied with ammunition and had to allow the surging masses to come to close quarters before delivering their fire; but then the terrible hail of lead fell into the dense masses as the sickle into the dry corn. Back they all rushed in wild flight. By 2 o'clock the danger was averted. Whilst these contests were in progress the XXth Corps had also enveloped the south and part of the east side of Beaune, but without making any energetic attack. In the north and north-west, on the other hand, Boisson's Brigade coming by way of Romainville and La Bretonnière was threatening La Rue-Boussier. At that place General von Woyna resolved at about 2 o'clock to advance, as soon as the greater part of the 57th Regiment and several batteries had arrived. Beaune must be relieved. In a bloody fight at close quarters Boisson's Brigade is driven out of Romainville by 4½ companies of the 57th Regiment, whilst further east other portions of the regiment possess themselves of the



heights of Les Roches and thus re-establish communication with the defenders of Beaune.

It was high time. The Brigades of Aube and Durochat (about nine to ten battalions) were already beginning to force an entry into the south-eastern extremity of Beaune and to climb the heights of Les Roches. The whole of this long line was defended by the six companies of the 57th just arrived, by three companies of the 16th, and by a company of Pioneers, in all by only ten Companies, but here also the commanders had their men well in hand. The stream of fire was not sent against the dense masses of the enemy till he was within 200 to 250 paces, but then with murderous effect. Onset followed upon onset till it was quite dark; on the side of the French ever new attempts, even at the cost of hideous losses, to bear down the small handfuls of Prussians by the mere weight of numbers; on the side of the Germans the iron endurance of men accustomed to victory and invincible by a frontal attack on account of their steady aim. All the French assaults fail, although finally the darkness of night and the arrival of reinforcements from their XVIIIth Corps favour the assailants.

On the south-west of Beaune the battle was already decided—after long and anxious hours. All communication from without had been cut off, the town was in flames, ammunition was nearly all spent, nothing was left but the firm will in the last resort to charge the enemy with the bayonet and to fall gloriously. But it was not to come to that. Since 7.30 in the morning the 5th Prussian Division stood assembled at Dadonville,^{*} awaiting the orders of the Commander-in-Chief. At half-past eleven orders (that had been delayed and long ago overtaken by events) arrived to advance only as far as Rougemont. The thunder of artillery from Beaune was distinctly heard, and information about the state of things with the Xth Corps arrived at Rougemont. The commander of the division therefore resolved on his own responsibility to advance by way of Boynes and Barville. The news, that Courcelles and Arconville were held by the enemy made no change in his resolve; only weak detachments were sent off to cover the flanks against those villages.

South of Barville the division deployed its artillery; its advanced guard, pushing forward, encountered the left wing of Polignac's Division, which was just making ready for a last assault on the churchyard of Beaune. At first the enemy stood his ground in the little wood north of Beaune. But when the German artillery arrived at La Bretonnière and sent its shells into the flank and rear of the crowds pressing on against the churchyard, their strength failed them, and in headlong confusion they all rushed towards the south-west. On the west side of the town only isolated encounters afterwards took place.

Night had set in and the battle seemed over. In crackling flames the fires burst forth from the ruined houses of the unhappy little town. Companies of the IIIrd Corps arrive and are received with shouts of exultation by the brave garrison. Suddenly and unexpectedly the enemy made one more assault along the road leading to Orme. General Crouzat had assembled the remnants of his corps which had not fled, at Orme. In deep column of assault these troops, following the example of their General, attack with fierce resolution the barricade which there blocked the exit from the town.

^{*} Dadonville is strictly speaking a suburb of Pithiviers, along the road the Beaune.

Only two companies of the 16th Regiment, and even these partly in the act of re-forming, receive the shock; but once more, as had happened many times on that day, the invincible discipline of the men prevailed. Not a shot was fired without word of command; not till the impetuously advancing flood of men emerged out of the mists of the November night into the flaring gleam of the burning houses, right in front of the muzzles of the silently watching Westphalians, did the fire crash forth. The effect was terrible. Piled up in heaps the corpses were found on the following morning close by the barricades; the rear men pushing on had met death on the top of the bodies of the men in front.

This brilliant victory over an overwhelming superiority of numbers was bought with the lives of 38 officers and 817 rank and file. The total loss of the French may be estimated at 8000 to 10,000 men.

In none of the numerous battles against the armies of the Republic was the superiority of the disciplined and carefully trained German infantry over the undeniably brave and resolute, but hastily collected, hosts of the French made more manifest than at Beaune-la-Rolande. What a nation spends on the thorough training of its army is well repaid afterwards in the saving of tears and blood. Not the most ardent patriotism, not the most heroic valour will counterbalance the martial qualities the soldier acquires by careful training during times of peace; to these the defenders of Beaune owe their victory. By it the Xth Corps has established for itself a monument of German martial virtues similar to that of Leuthen,¹ established by the army of Frederick the Great.

The tremendous exertions of the troops, the darkness of the night and the difficult character of the country precluded the possibility of an immediate pursuit. Moreover, the greater part of the XVIIIth Corps of the French stood in good order at Venouille, Juranville and Maizières, so that the generals in command were not at once fully aware of the magnitude of their success.

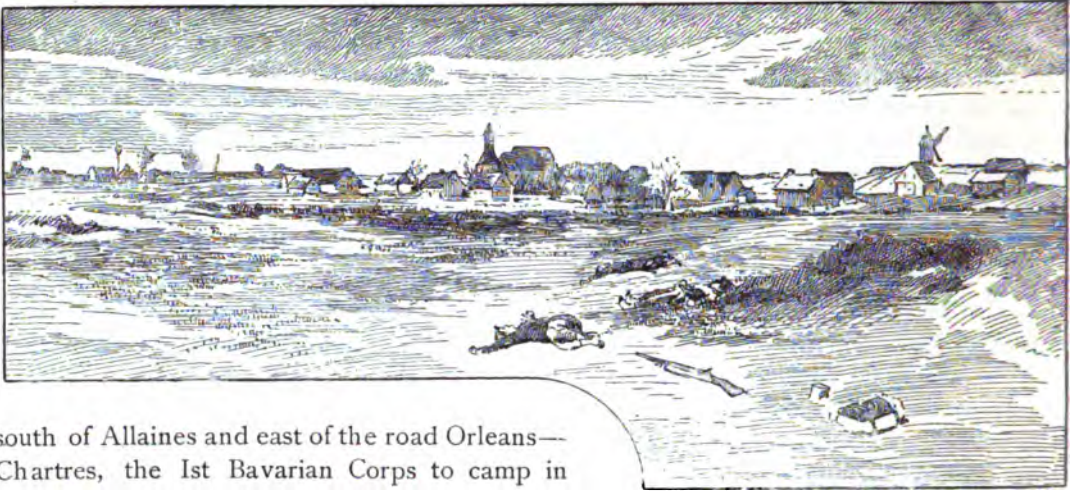
This XVIIIth Corps did not retire till the 29th, when it was followed by the Prussian advanced troops. Even now reports still came in that heavy French masses were assembled east of the forest of Orleans. Prince Frederick Charles, faithful to his resolve and fully expecting a second attack of the enemy, speedily concentrated his army more closely round Beaune and Pithiviers, and ordered the Grand Duke to join his Army Section to his own right wing.

On the 1st of December, however, the aspect of affairs was changed. The French had evacuated Maizières and Bois-Commun and withdrawn to the south-west. Thus an offensive movement on their part east of the forest of Orleans had become improbable.

THE BATTLE OF LOIGNY—POUPRY.

On the 28th of November we left the Army Section resting in the neighbourhood of Bonneval from the toils of their march through Le Perche. On the 29th the 4th Cavalry Division was to reach Toury, the 17th and 22nd Divisions to take up quarters

¹ The battle of Leuthen was fought on the 5th of December, 1757; in it Frederick defeated 80,000 Austrians with an army of barely half that number; this victory was solely due to Frederick's military genius; it rescued him from an imminent total ruin. [*Trs.*]



south of Allaines and east of the road Orleans—Chartres, the 1st Bavarian Corps to camp in the neighbourhood of Orgères, the 6th Division of Cavalry to cover the march of the Army Section to the south and advance as far as Villamblain.¹ On that day the 1st Bavarian

LOIGNY.

(After a sketch by C. Freyberg, 3rd Dec. 1870.)

Corps encountered part of Lipowski's Corps of *Francs-tireurs*, attacked them at Varize and dispersed them. A body of very elegantly clad and well-armed *Francs-tireurs* of the Gironde were made prisoners. The 6th Division of Cavalry drove before it French Cavalry of the XVth Corps towards Tournois.

On the 30th the 22nd Division reached Toury, the 17th remained on the Orleans—Chartres road and the 1st Bavarian Corps in the neighbourhood of Orgères. The 6th Division of Cavalry rode north as far as Cormainville² with the object of joining the Second Army. The 1st Bavarian Corps was thus deprived of the cover towards the south which it had had up till then; its patrols reported that Terminiers was occupied by a strong force of the enemy, and that considerable French forces had also been observed at Dambron and Tournois.

Our information about the enemy was on the whole very scanty. Spies were no longer to be obtained and the reconnoitring cavalry everywhere came upon localities that were held by the enemy, but were only rarely able to tell whether the occupying force consisted of troops of the Line, National-Guards or *Francs-tireurs*; the main forces of the enemy were hardly ever lighted upon.

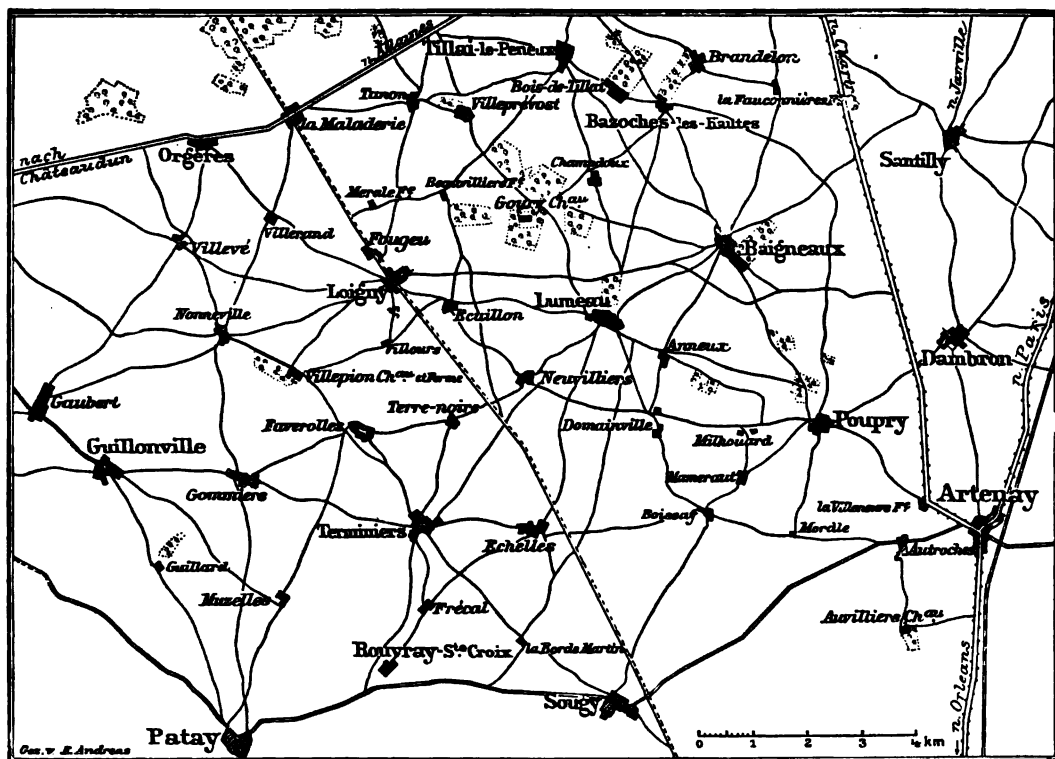
On the 1st of December it was resolved to find at least a partial remedy for this inconvenience. The 6th Division of Cavalry was to be replaced by the 4th, which was to move to Varize, and supported by Bavarian infantry was to reconnoitre towards the south. The remaining troops remained in their several positions.

In the early morning hours of the 1st of December General von der Tann could not hide from himself the extremely perilous position of his corps. The thinned ranks of the feeble Bavarian Corps, placed as it was with unprotected flank on the right of the Army Section which was spread over a front of 15 miles, in close touch with

¹ Near the road Orleans—Chartres and to the south of it. [Villamblain is a short distance about west-south-west from Patay.—*Trs.*]

² West of Orgères.

an enemy vastly superior in numbers, and deprived of the cover and information afforded by large bodies of cavalry, could not but positively invite attacks of the French. The General was also well aware that the late events had not passed tracelessly over his men. The strength of his battalions had been reduced on an average to only 550 muskets, and the older, thoroughly trained men now formed merely a small minority. Recruits, who had been with the colours for three months at the outside, and Landwehr¹ men with inadequate military training had replaced the reliable and efficient soldiers. The loss of officers of the Line had been extraordinarily heavy, the system for providing reserve-officers had existed too short a time to yield



LOIGNY—POUPRY.

a sufficient supply. The expedient of giving commissions to non-commissioned officers had already been frequently resorted to. The strain of the last few weeks had severely taxed the capacity of these partially young troops, and the events of Coulmiers had made some impression on their tone.

A surprise by an enemy greatly more numerous, or unfortunate engagements of particular units might under such circumstances prove disastrous, and provision had to be made against such eventualities. General von der Tann therefore pushed forward an advanced guard (1st Brigade) into the neighbourhood of Terminiers. When

¹ Universal military service having become law in Bavaria as late as 1867, a large portion of the Landwehr men had not been under arms previous to 1870.

the Brigade of Cuirassiers reported the approach of strong French columns from the direction of Patay, he assembled his corps at La Maladerie, being covered by this advanced guard.

Towards one o'clock the 4th Division of Cavalry brought the positive definite information that the enemy had not advanced further than Patay, which was 7 miles distant, and that the Division of Cavalry was therefore moving into its quarters. A collision with considerable forces on the short winter-day was now no longer expected, and accordingly the Army Corps received orders to be billeted in the villages, being covered by the 1st Brigade, which for a while was still to remain on duty.

At 3 o'clock it also was to go into quarters, but about that time the Brigade of Cuirassiers brought the report that powerful hostile columns of all arms were advancing upon Gommiers. This placed the 1st Brigade in a very awkward position. With only 3500 muskets, 18 guns and 3 regiments of cavalry they stood exposed to a powerful enemy in an open field with unobstructed view, and far away from any reinforcements. But the very circumstance that the corps was in the act of moving into quarters necessitated that the brigade should accept battle even at the risk of being annihilated.

On the 30th of November the French Army of the Loire was posted as follows: The XVIIth Corps (Sonis) stood south of the forest of Marchenoir, the XVIth Corps (Chanzy) in the neighbourhood of St. Pérvay, the XVth Corps (Pallières) by the forest of Orleans, from Artenay as far as Chilleurs-aux-Bois, the XXth Corps (Crouzat) round Chambon and Nivelle, the XVIIIth Corps (Billot) near and in front of Bellegarde.

The result of the battle of Beaune-la-Rolande had increased the helpless perplexity at the French Head-Quarters. New orders were awaited from Tours, and there they undervalued their disaster and planned the continuance of offensive movements. On the 30th there arrived in Tours a despatch from Paris, which indeed had been sent off on the 26th, but the balloon that carried it out had been driven over to Norway. In this despatch General Trochu, the Governor of Paris, announced that on the 29th of November his Army would endeavour to break through the German lines in a southern direction. Gambetta at once resolved to set the Army of the Loire in motion towards Fontainebleau by way of Pithiviers. That very evening Freycinet held a Council of War at the French Head-Quarters, St. Jean-de-la-Ruelle,¹ which resolved to commence operations on the very next day, wheeling to the right in the direction of Pithiviers in such a manner that the XVIth Corps followed by the XVIIth should march upon Patay.

General Chanzy gave orders that on the 1st of December Michel's Division should march upon Terminiers, the two other Divisions to Borde-Martin and Sougy on the road Orleans—Chartres. Thereby the Corps made front to the north-east, and its left wing, the Division of Cavalry and the 1st Division of Infantry, must come into collision with the advanced guard of the Bavarians. Moreover, the French Divisions had been ordered to march right across the fields in lines of battalions at deploying intervals, so that the Bavarians were encountered, not by the heads of columns on the march, but by the deployed 1st Division (Jauréguiberry), which on the 1st of December numbered 13,000 muskets and 42 guns.

¹ A suburb of Orleans on the road to Châteaudun.

General von Dietl, the commander of the 1st Bavarian Brigade, had endeavoured to concentrate as rapidly as possible his men, who were widely distributed as outposts; at first, however, he only succeeded in getting together nine companies and two batteries in and near Gommiers. Against the front of this small body Bourdillon's Brigade was deployed whilst Deplanque's Brigade and the Division of Cavalry burst in upon them by way of Guillonville. General von Dietl could see the deployment of the enemy quite well, and he slowly retired to the position Nonneville—Villepion, where meanwhile the rest of his brigade had assembled. Fortunately the 2nd Bavarian Brigade was already (at 3.30) advancing to Nonneville by way of Villevé. At about 2.30 this brigade moving into quarters had been overtaken at Orgères by the Chief of the Staff of the corps and hastily sent on to the battle-field of the 1st Brigade. Here, leaning with its left wing upon Nonneville, it formed a curve slightly bent to the north.

Thus Jauréguiberry's attack, which outflanked the Bavarians assembled at Nonneville-Villepion on both sides, met the 1st Bavarian Division, and made but slow progress, notwithstanding that the infantry fire of the French did considerable harm to the Bavarians at long ranges at which the inferior weapons of the latter were ineffective. Towards 4 o'clock it looked as if the centre of the Bavarians at Villepion would be burst through. From south and west dense swarms of skirmishers pressed forward against the battery of Prince Leopold of Bavaria engaged there; if it were compelled to fall back, then Nonneville was lost and the line of retreat of the Bavarians much endangered. The gallant Prince preferred to perish with his battery rather than quit his post and endanger the whole Army. Making front in two directions, the four guns which were not yet *hors de combat* repulsed the swarms of the enemy, which were already closely approaching. The Prince himself was wounded, but did not leave his battery, near which Captain Hofmann¹ of the Regiment of Life Guards (Infantry) immovably stood his ground, although his men had not a cartridge left.

Dusk of the gloomy day was drawing nigh; the attacks of the French seemed to slacken, especially against the 2nd Brigade, where Lieutenant-General von Stephan, commander of the division, had been severely wounded in the line of skirmishers. The Bavarians hoped to be able to hold out, for the heads of the 4th Brigade had already appeared on the field, had reached Faverolles just in time to keep out the enemy and had repulsed his attack. Suddenly, Admiral Jauréguiberry makes a surprise on the south-east side of Villepion with 4 battalions. Ere the defenders are well

¹ Has since retired as Chief of the General Staff of the Bavarian Army and with the rank of Lieutenant-General.



ADMIRAL JAURÉGUIBERRY.



PRINCE LEOPOLD OF BAVARIA WITH HIS BATTERY AT VILLEPION.

aware of what is happening, park and castle are filled with dense masses of the enemy. In fierce individual combats the Bavarians are attacked and fired upon from all sides, friend can no longer be distinguished from foe, and only one dark wave after another seems to surge up along all the roads and paths of the park. Villepion is lost and the whole position has become untenable. Only the 2nd Brigade remains unmoved till in the complete darkness of night the enemy's attacks cease. The 1st Bavarian Corps camped at Orgères and Loigny, the XVIth Corps of the French at Villepion, Terminiers, and Sougy, and of the XVIIth the main body had reached St. Péray and the advanced guard Patay.

With sullen wrath the Bavarians had left their dead in the hands of the enemy; along with the gloomy mists of a bitterly cold winter night a dark spirit of resolute hatred, a burning longing for revenge settled upon the taciturn German hosts, cowering sleeplessly round their smouldering fires. Their undeserved misfortune had turned the young soldiers into old warriors. It is characteristic of the Germans that disaster and distress increase their energy. General von der Tann was well aware of that; he knew his men and was determined not to yield another foot's breadth, even if on the morrow he had again singly to sustain the combat. But it was not to come to that.

The morning sun of the 2nd of December rose blood-red in the sky and illumined a rough winter day. Glittering and sparkling the trees had donned an icy covering, the ground was steaming and smoking, and out of the billowing mists slowly rose in sharp outlines the villages round which yesterday's contests had raged. There at La Maladerie, ever since the early morning the heavy dark masses of the 1st Bavarian Corps stood closely concentrated; but towards Villepion and Nonneville, from south-

south-east long columns of the French kept moving up. There was no doubt of it, that to-day the whole French Army would be engaged.

And so it turned out. Reports of a successful sally from Paris made by Ducrot, and the victory secured by the XVIth Army Corps on the 1st of December had stimulated the sense of and passion for victory of the French to a very high degree. The advance already begun in the general direction towards the forest of Fontainebleau was to be continued with all energy on the 2nd of December. General Chanzy sent his 3rd Division upon Terminiers, his 2nd upon Loigny; the 1st should meanwhile form the Reserve at Villepion, and the Division of Cavalry fall upon the rear of the Bavarians by the way of Orgères. The XVIIth Corps was ordered provisionally to assemble at Patay and Sougy; of the XVth the 3rd Division was ordered to move in the direction of Santilly, the 2nd on Ruan and Aschères and the 1st on Neuville-aux-Bois and Chilleurs. To oppose the 1st Bavarian Corps, which mustered on that day barely 14,000 bayonets, there was primarily assembled the XVIth Corps numbering 33,000 men, and behind them the heads of the XVIIth Corps were approaching.

On the 1st of December the Grand Duke had determined himself to attack the French. The reports coming in from the Bavarians effected no change in his resolve; the Bavarians were for the while to hold the position Beauvillers—Château-Goury, till the 17th Division should arrive at Lumeau, and the 22nd at Baigneux. This meant that the Bavarians were for some time to singly sustain the unequal contest. In the nick of time their 2nd Division succeeded after half-past nine in reaching and occupying the position assigned to them. The main body of the 4th Brigade now stood at Château-Goury, and the 3rd Brigade between it and Beauvillers. In the latter place a few battalions of both brigades were distributed.

Already the French had approached quite close, and had even attacked Château-Goury, but had been repulsed by the battalion on outpost duty. The 3rd Brigade was hardly yet drawn up, when Barry's Division impetuously rushed up and greatly threatened the artillery engaged in the first line. The brave 3rd Brigade, which had done no fighting on the preceding day and was full of martial ardour, could not stand this. All at once, without word of command, the 21 companies that were on the spot spring up and fling themselves upon the French, who turn and flee, pursued by 3000 Bavarians! Those who resist are bayoneted; and breathlessly, by way of conclusion, Ecuillon, 2000 yards off, is taken by assault. This audacious onset had infected also the 4th Brigade. One battalion rushes forth out of Château-Goury and ejects the enemy out of the strip of woodland north-east of Ecuillon.

This onset of the 3rd Brigade was a bold heroic performance, but the men had allowed themselves to be carried away too far; they now stood out of breath in a long, thin line far away from all succour, in the midst of the enemy's forces, surrounded on all sides by the second line of Barry's Division and by Jauréguiberry's Division. The little band could no longer escape its fate; it had to retreat with fearful loss. There Colonel Schuch of the 3rd and Major von Mayer of the 22nd Regiment received their death-wounds, and with them fell 41 officers and more than 600 rank and file killed and wounded. Various parts of the line, as it slowly retired, turning round and facing the enemy, made several counter-charges, but it was all in vain. The ever swelling flood of the superior forces of the enemy irresistibly swept them on. Not till they reached Villeprévost could the fragments of the Brigade be assembled again.

The pursuing enemy was checked by the fire of the six Bavarian batteries posted from west of Beauvillers as far as Château-Goury; but then dense swarms of skirmishers streamed up and compelled them to limber up. At the same time repeated rushes of the French upon Beauvillers and Château-Goury were brilliantly repulsed. At Beauvillers some Bavarian battalions had even replied with a most energetic counter-attack in the direction of Loigny. Similarly at Château-Goury a short rush made by a single company effected a speedy retreat of the French.

These successes on the wings made themselves felt also in the centre; where the masses, after having defeated the 3rd Brigade, and the artillery of the 2nd Division streamed back again to Loigny. Forthwith seven Bavarian batteries, hastening forward, seized the line Beauvillers—Château-Goury and thus the communication between the two wings was again restored. It might have been about 12.30.



FARM AT LOIGNY.

(After a sketch by C. Freyberg, 3rd Dec. 1870.)

We have now to record the incidents which took place with the 1st Bavarian Division. This Division had at first been assembled at Tanon and Villeprévost behind the right wing of the 2nd Division which was fighting in the first line. The French who had surrounded Beauvillers made isolated

attacks upon Villeprévost, but these were easily repulsed. When afterwards the enemy's artillery and large bodies of infantry showed themselves at Merale-Ferme, ten batteries of the 1st Corps and of the 4th Division of Cavalry deployed from Orgères by way of La Maladerie towards Beauvillers. These forces outflanked the left wing of the French at Merale-Ferme and partly even took it in rear, thereby depriving its attack of all thorough effectiveness, and after 11 o'clock the 1st Division even began to act successfully on the offensive. Its left wing became engaged in the contests round Beauvillers, whilst its right wing turned against Merale-Ferme.

Frequent changes of position among the troops of the 1st Brigade, numerous fluctuations and sudden changes in the state of affairs make it difficult to form a clear view of the battle. Towards one o'clock the left wing had pressed forward from Beauvillers towards Fougeu, the right was engaged near Merale-Ferme, which stood in flames. This was the direction in which General von Orff, the commander of the 2nd Brigade, had finally led the greater part of his brigade in perfect order and well in hand, and aimed his decisive blow.

Whilst thus on the right wing of the Bavarians every danger appeared to be surmounted, a terrible storm once more gathered over the centre and the left wing. Towards one o'clock the enemy's artillery-fire upon Château-Goury increased largely;

and suddenly, out of the gentle undulations of the ground in front, there appeared strong bodies of French skirmishers who resolutely pressed forward upon the whole front, from Beauvillers as far as Château-Goury. Heedless of the shells of the Bavarian artillery, these masses, incessantly firing, rolled forward; close compact bodies were distinctly seen pushing themselves into the front ranks and keeping up the forward movement; the officers were observed hastening in front of their skirmishers and setting them a noble example of self-sacrificing valour. The cry "En avant! en avant!" rang forth loudly and passionately through the smoke and din of battle. Once more the Bavarian artillery was overthrown, the infantry fell back in a long line, and Château-Goury was enveloped in a dense cloud of fumes and smoke, rent by the flashes of death-dealing shots.

Von der Tann remained immovable at Beauvillers. He had no reserves left, fall who might. Will his thinned, feeble battalions be able once more to gain a footing in presence of an overwhelming foe? That was the question that agitated him, and Wellington's exclamation at Waterloo passed through his mind: "Would to Heaven it were evening or the Prussians would come!" Suddenly the whole aspect changed. The French masses are staggered; their fire ceases; with broken ranks they fall back upon Loigny; at their rear and on their flanks Prussian helmets and Prussian bayonets gleam in the light of the winter sun. Their flight is infectious; spite of the desperate efforts of the officers, the whole French line, just now victorious, turns to flight, and speedily the field in front is clear of smoke and filled with fugitives. On the right too the noise of battle had risen into a perfect hurricane; there too the French fled in dense masses in the direction of Villerand. In a fierce charge General von Orff had taken Merale-Ferme, borne down Deplanque's Brigade and was now pursuing irresistibly as far as Villerand. As by a single blow the scene of greatest danger was changed into that of a victorious battle. Already the Prussians were pressing up to Loigny, where in mad confusion the remnants of the French Division of Barry and Jauréguiberry were contending with each other for room of escape. The 17th Division, the Mecklenburghers and the men of the Hanseatic¹ towns, the extreme North of Germany had come to the rescue of the extreme South.

The 17th Division on its march from La Fauconière-Ferme to Lumeau had early been informed both of the straits the Bavarians were in, and of the approach of strong French columns, of Morandy's Division of the XVIth Corps upon Lumeau and Baig-neaux, and had hastened its march accordingly. The foremost battalion arrived at Lumeau just in time to repulse the swarms of skirmishers of the 40th French marching Regiment. Six German batteries hastened up, took up a position west of Lumeau, and under a single command opposed the four French batteries of Morandy's Division. At 11 o'clock the 40th marching Regiment, now reformed, attacked Lumeau, outflanking it from the east; meanwhile four more companies of the German advanced guard had arrived there. With quick resolve our batteries wheeled to the left so as to bear on the left flank of the French. At the same time six batteries of the 22nd Division which had hastened to the field far in front of their infantry took up a position south of Baig-neaux. The 40th French Regiment, incautiously led, ran into the shells of the twelve batteries and into the fire of the garrison of Lumeau, which was reserved till they

¹ Viz., Hamburg, Lübeck and Bremen. [*Trs.*]

were in close proximity. Though suffering grievously, the brave fellows were endeavouring to hold out, when the battalion forming the advanced guard of the 22nd Division burst out from Baigneaux and charged the wavering troops at the double. Now there was no restraining them any more; in wild haste their fragments flee south to a great distance from the field, and in contagious terror they sweep along with them two battalions of the 71st Regiment of Mobiles. In the evening there were missing 2300 men from the two regiments.

The batteries of the 22nd Division pursued at full gallop to the heights of Lumeau. A French battery attempts to check the fire of the pursuers, but a squadron of the 11th Regiment of Uhlans on the watch, notices the manoeuvre, and in a few minutes

the guns are in the hands of the Uhlans, whilst the vanguards of the 17th and 22nd Divisions start on the pursuit. In this manner the infantry of Morandy's Division is swept off the field; a glorious opening fight for Mecklenburghers, Hanse-men, and Hessians.



BARON V. KOTTWITZ.

Meanwhile the main body of the 33rd (Hanseatic) Brigade (17th Division) had arrived north of Lumeau and received orders to attack the right wing of the French which was bearing hard upon the Bavarians, and to take Loigny. The struggle of the Bavarians at Château-Goury was distinctly visible; heavy French swarms were already closing round the castle, from the windows of which the defenders kept up an incessant fire. General von Kottwitz, however, the commander of the 33rd Brigade, did not intend to diminish his

expected success by undue haste, but to strike home destructively with a well-directed blow. As on parade the four battalions were led, hidden by a feature of the ground, close to the French right wing, which, having no inkling of their terrible danger, was pressing on towards Château-Goury with ever increasing heat and fury. Now the Hanseatic battalions wheel to the right, deliver a murderous rapid fire, a loudly exulting hurrah, and the sons of the sea-coast fall obliquely upon the flank and rear of the French who till now had been confident of victory. Their furious cries of "En avant" are hushed, their sword-bayonets flash round, the extreme right wing starts back, gets crowded, turns to flight and carries the whole line away with it. In a mad panic they all rush back upon Loigny and there is no holding them back. The enemy's strength had been well-nigh spent by the tenacious resistance of the Bavarians, and now the sudden surprise reduced the remnants to ruin.

Without a check the Hanse-men push forward as far as Loigny and Fougéu. The foremost Bavarian companies storm forward with them, prolonging their line to the right; whilst the main body of the Bavarian Brigade, at some distance in the rear, collect their battalions which had got much mixed up in the severe struggle. Germans of the northern plain and Bavarians, with exulting greetings, now rush jointly upon the common foe. ¹

Fougéu is taken in the panic of the first onset, but in front of and within Loigny the struggle blazes up with embittered fury. The French fight with desperation. Not till after repeated assaults, the band even being at last led to the front, the edge of the village is taken. Soon the buildings are aflame; the fire, gaining more and more ground, circumscribes the place of combat, and the small German body, handling bayonet and butt-end, forces its way into the very midst of the enemy and at last seems on the point of succumbing to the overwhelming numbers. Now, however, the 34th Brigade (Mecklenburghers) come storming in, entering Loigny from the south-east, whilst the Bavarians coming from Château-Goury attack its west side. The contest at Loigny draws to a close. Only the churchyard, which is surrounded by a stone wall, the gallant enemy holds with unshaken constancy, but being cut off from behind, his only alternative is captivity or death.

Whilst these struggles were in progress the German artillery had advanced along the whole line and greatly hastened the retreat of the fragments of the divisions of the XVIth French Corps, and besides this the 4th Division of Cavalry, jointly with the Bavarian Cuirassiers, had advanced at a trot in a southerly direction from the neighbourhood of Orgères, and had swept the field in that direction. There they observed, south of Nonneville, long columns of the enemy's Army, moving from south to north; it was the XVIIth French hastening to the support of the XVIth Corps.

General de Sonis, the commander of this corps, was a brave man, but wholly unfit to fill the exalted and responsible post to which fate had called him. Up to the 2nd of December he took a series of measures which greatly weakened the already slack discipline of his troops. Of his disastrous advance upon the German lines of communication we have spoken before; but this was followed by hasty movements and night marches, which even seasoned troops could ill have borne.

After numerous misapprehensions the XVIIth Corps stands, on the 2nd of December at 3.30, with one division at Guillonville, with about 3000 men at Villepion, and with the rest scattered as far as Terminiers on the east and Patay on the south. De Sonis himself has hastened to Villepion and wholly lost the general supervision of his corps; and, moreover, the occurrences at that place so engaged the attention of this passionate and impetuous man, that he quite lost sight of his more important duties as commander.

We have seen that after the termination of the battle in front the Bavarians had assembled and reformed. At about 3 o'clock the 2nd Division stood north-east of Loigny—Fougéu, and several of its battalions joined in the combat near Loigny, but the 1st Division with the bulk of its artillery had moved on to Villerand and changed

¹ During the whole of this war the Germans never lose sight of the fact that their long divided races were now acting unitedly. Indeed the nation's greatest gain in this successful war was not the Millions, nor yet the recovery of the ancient provinces, but the creation of "United Germany." [*Trs.*]

front to attack Villepion. Here the advanced troops of the division were met by such a stout resistance that General von der Tann, considering that dusk had set in, broke off the engagement and only ordered the continuance of an active artillery fire upon the place. De Sonis perhaps considered this a victory, and after half-past four, dusk being far advanced, he pushed forward with his troops and the remnants of the XVIth Corps against Loigny.

Some detached German companies were driven out of Villours and the little wood to the north of it, and now the mass of the French impetuously rushed upon Loigny, where, as was said above, the conflict for the possession of the churchyard and some fortified houses was still in progress. The danger of the brave German combatants appeared to be extreme; the darkness, the loud battle-cries of the French, the incessant rolling fire of the infantry, the tongues of flame shooting upwards from Loigny and Villours, all combined to produce a heart-stirring effect on the men.

General von Treskow stood at Loigny, and with him his whole Reserve, two battalions of the 75th. With bold resolve he hurled these against the enemy near the south-east corner of the village, and Lieutenant-Colonel von Böhn with eight companies of the 75th, 76th and 89th Regiments fell on the left flank of the advancing masses from Fougeu. In Loigny itself Prussians and Bavarians spared no effort both to repel the assault and to make themselves master of the whole place.

These counter-attacks were more than the enemy could endure. Soon a disorderly multitude rushes back to Villepion, pursued at shortest range by the volleys of the Germans. Their desperate enterprise is wrecked and ruined; De Sonis himself falls severely wounded, and with him 100 officers and men. The churchyard and all Loigny are now captured by the Germans.

Meanwhile the winter night had settled down on the blood-stained field of battle. With a pale light the moon had risen, partly hidden by chasing snow-clouds, and her silver rays mingled with the flickering lurid gleam of the burning villages. Glittering, the waves of light traversed the sparkling fields of snow and the frost-clad trees and flitted over the pallid faces of the fallen; upon the roar of battle followed an uncanny silence. To the east, however, there was still heard the growling of distant battle, now mounting into a loud crackling of a musketry fire and again dying away in muffled sounds.

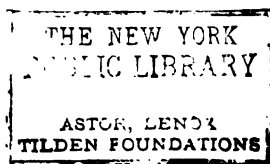
The 22nd Division was still hotly engaged at Poupry. This division we left when its advanced guard and its artillery, jointly with the 17th Division, had shattered the French Division of Morandy. This was at half-past twelve. After that, a much more dangerous enemy appeared on the left flank of the 22nd Division, but it was observed in time by Colomb's Cavalry Brigade. The 3rd Division (Peytavin) of the XVth French Corps had, according to orders received, marched north by way of Artenay along the great highway. It moved in bodies in close formation and had the 2nd Brigade on the left, and the 1st Brigade on the right of the great highway, the deployed infantry regiment of the 2nd Brigade (the 27th) had reached the hill of Poupry when they encountered the Prussian cavalry.

General von Wittich being informed of these events, ordered the 22nd Division assembled along the road Lumeau—Poupry to change front by brigades against Poupry. The 95th Regiment of the 43rd Infantry Brigade succeeded in the nick of time with one battalion in reaching Poupry at the double, when the skirmishers of the 27th



REPULSE OF THE XVIIITH FRENCH CORPS AT LOIGNY.
(By permission of the Photographic Society of Berlin.)

[face p. 413.]



French Regiment were already entering the village. In and north of this the whole Prussian 43rd Brigade of Infantry (five battalions) was gradually assembling. Whilst this formation was in progress the 27th Regiment of the French made three attempts to storm Poupry, but was each time repulsed with unusually heavy loss. At the same time the six batteries of the 22nd Division had deployed south of Poupry, fronting east. Now the remainder of the 2nd French Brigade came up and compelled some of the Prussian batteries to change position; at the same time some Reserve Artillery of the XVth French Corps appeared at Autroche and directed an oblique fire upon the Prussian batteries. Relief only came when Morâle was occupied by a battalion of the 44th Brigade of Prussian Infantry that was coming up.

It was high time, for the battle had taken a very unfavourable turn north of Poupry, and urgently called for the coöperation of the artillery. It must be remembered that a battalion of the 95th had at the beginning of the engagement turned to the woodlands north of Poupry. These consisted of a closely connected group of woodlands immediately north of Poupry, and a second group about 600 yards east of the first. It seems that, covered by this second group, the whole of the 1st French Brigade, consisting of ten battalions in several lines, had deployed fronting west, whilst two batteries of the division from the neighbourhood of Dambron directed its fire against the first group of woodlands.

As soon as the 95th Battalion entered this first group it became vigorously engaged with the 1st French Brigade, which had advanced from the second upon the first group. At 2 o'clock the 94th Regiment of the 44th Brigade joined in the conflict within the wood. In a furious conflict, now driven back and again gaining ground, the Thuringians won the eastern edge of the first group of woodlands. Next powerful masses of the enemy stepped forth from the western edge of the second wood, to cross the broad gap that separates the two woods and succour their hard-pressed comrades. General von Colomb standing with his horse north of the woodlands, observed this movement, and unhesitatingly hurled Cuirassiers and Uhlans on the right flank of the French, who hastily retired into the second wood. But when the storm of horse had rushed into the gap the shot of the enemy was poured from both sides into the ranks of the gallant brigade, charging with heedless audacity right up to the edges of the woods. At length ditches and dense undergrowth set a limit to the bold attack. The assembly was now sounded and in a few moments the brigade was drawn up north of the gap, ready for a second charge. At the same time a Prussian battery coming from the south had appeared north of Poupry and prevented the advance of French troops in close formation beyond the western edge of the second group of woods.

The struggle of the 94th in the first woodland had been greatly aided by the heroic intervention of the cavalry, and at last they succeeded in clearing the whole wood of the enemy and in reaching its eastern edge. Here the four feeble Prussian battalions (94th and II-95th) had to face ten battalions of the 1st French Brigade, which were making ready to fall upon their front from the second wood and at the same time outflank them from the north; this was at about 4 o'clock. After a desperate defence the Prussians were compelled to retreat as the night fell. Again and again they wheeled round, but were each time forced back by the overwhelming numbers of the enemy emerging out of the dark.

Now General von Wittich engaged his last Reserves in the turmoil of the mighty contest. Two battalions of the 83rd coming from the west rush with loud hurrahs into the woods, the western edge of which was still held by the all but exhausted remnants of the 94th and 95th. With shouts of delight these greet the longed-for succour, and now all of them once more rush forward into the dark wood, where the fitful moonlight scarce reveals to them the fleeing masses of the enemy. Over ditches and hedges, through tangled shrubs and across broad clearings the storm of the Thuringians and Hessians swept unchecked. Here too the battle was won: the French retreated to Artenay and Dambron.

A glorious victory! 28,000 German foot, 6200 horse and 196 guns had completely routed 87,000 French foot, with 5600 horse and 264 guns, losing 4200 men. The French lost 18,000 men and 9 guns.

The aggressive power of the great Army of the Loire was now finally broken. The toils and disillusion of the march through Le Perche now reaped their rewards: the head of Frederick Francis of Mecklenburg-Schwerin is adorned for all times with the laurels of victory of Loigny-Poupry.

United Germany there spilt its blood. In the barns of the burning villages lay wounded to the death the sons of the North German Lowlands by the side of him of the Alps and of the Thuringian hills. For long, sorrowful years they had been estranged from each other, like children of the same mother severed early in life by a cruel fate. But now, when the shades of death are closing in upon them, the remembrance of their early childhood rises before them, together with that of their common mother and their brotherly love as the last solace in the closing hour. ¹

During the night between the 2nd and 3rd of December the Bavarians lay encamped round Orgères and Maladerie, having outposts in Villerand and Loigny, the 17th Division at Lumeau, the 22nd at Anneux and Domainville and the 4th Division of Cavalry round Cormainville. Opposite to them lay the XVIth Corps of the French at Terminiers and Gommiers, the XVIIth round Patay, the XVth, as already mentioned, at Dambron and Artenay. The 3rd Division of this Corps was joined late in the evening by the 2nd Division from Ruan.

THE SECOND CAPTURE OF ORLEANS.

The attack of the Army of the Loire in the direction of Pithiviers was hopelessly defeated. On that point Aurelle de Paladines could no longer entertain any doubts after he had received, about midnight 2nd—3rd December, the despatches of the XVIth Corps. The General resolved to fall back upon the entrenched positions north of Orleans, which, according to his opinion, ought never to have been abandoned.

Accordingly on the morning of the 3rd Chanzy was ordered to return with the XVIth and XVIIth Corps into his former positions of St. Pérvy and Marchénoir. The fortified posts of Gidy and Provenchère were to be occupied by the 3rd Division, the entrenchments of Chevilly and St. Lyé by the 1st Division of the XVth Corps,

¹ Englishmen cannot be sufficiently reminded that the rejoicings of the Germans over the victories in 1870,71 are not exultation over a brave and fallen enemy, but joy over the reunion of their divided country. Not hatred of Frenchmen, but love of Germans is the key-note of their song of triumph. [*Trs.*]

whilst the 2nd Division of this Corps posted at Dambron was to cover the retreat. The Delegation of Tours now also invested the General with the command of the XVIIIth and XXth Corps, which were under the common leadership of General Bourbaki. Not till the evening of the 3rd did the latter receive the instructions of Paladines, ordering him to close up his corps towards the left.

On the German side Prince Frederick Charles had on the 2nd of December received orders from the Great Head-Quarters to attack Orleans forthwith. On that very evening the IIIrd Corps was assembled at Pithiviers, and the Xth had already been moved on to Bazoches-les-Gallerands.

The Prince planned to make, on the 3rd of December, an enveloping attack on Orleans; the Army Section was to advance on the west of the Paris—Orleans road; the IXth Corps was to attack Artenay and send a flank guard to St. Lyé; the IIIrd Corps was to push forward on a broad front as far as Loury by way of Chilleurs-aux-Bois; the Xth Corps, making a detour over Pithiviers, was to draw up behind the IIIrd Corps as a reserve to the whole. The 1st Division of Cavalry, with a Brigade of the Xth Corps, was to cover the left wing of the Army, and the 6th Division of Cavalry was placed between the IIIrd and the IXth Corps.

The Grand Duke at 9.30 assembled the 22nd Division and the 2nd Cavalry Brigade at Poupry, to support the IXth Corps in its attack upon Artenay; the 17th Division at Anneux-Ferme; the Bavarians at Lumeau; the 4th Cavalry Division with three Bavarian battalions was to cover the right wing of the Army Section, and make a wide reconnaissance by Châteaudun in the direction of Beaugency.

We will now follow the course of events, beginning with those on the left wing of the Germans. Before the 1st Division of the XVth French Corps had entered on its retreat from Neuville-aux-Bois and Chilleurs upon Chevilly and St. Lyé, it was attacked by the IIIrd Corps. The latter arrived after 9 o'clock before the strong French position at Santeau; its 6th Division of Infantry being on the west and its 5th on the east of the road Pithiviers—Orleans. First (at 10.30) the artillery of the 6th Division became engaged, then, suffering considerable loss, that of the 5th Division, and somewhat later the Corps Artillery moved into line. The French batteries of less than half the strength were no match for the overpowering effect of these 84 guns. Towards 12 o'clock they abandoned their position. Almost without a struggle Santeau fell, also Chilleurs-aux-Bois, which had been heavily bombarded by the pursuing Prussian artillery. In hasty flight the French ran to the forest. The whole IIIrd Corps followed as far as Loury and put out strong covering forces in all directions, as severe fighting was heard in the direction of Neuville.

Towards 8 o'clock in the evening a lively musketry-fire was suddenly heard from the outposts placed in the direction of Neuville. The French garrison in its retreat from Neuville upon Rebréchien, had lost its way in the forest and lighted upon companies of the 35th Prussian Regiment. Before the rapid fire of the Prussians the enemy was scattered in every direction, and left seven guns behind in the wood.

At Neuville-aux-Bois there stood eight battalions and two batteries of the 1st Division of the XVth Corps of the French, when the left flank-detachment of the IXth Corps marched up from the direction of Crottes. (It consisted of three Hessian battalions and half a Prussian one, one Hessian battery and half a Hessian squadron; in the progress of the battle they were joined by one more battalion and three and half squadrons.)

With heavy losses the Hessians pressed forward by way of La Tour upon St. Germain-le-Grand, which was stormed as dusk set in. But as they were under the impression that they were engaged with greatly superior numbers, and as, moreover, strong reserves of the enemy were observed at Neuville-aux-Bois and Villereau, the Detachment retired to Aschères-le-Marché. Colonel von Winckler, the commander of the German troops here engaged, had already during the progress of the fight sent an officer to Chilleurs-aux-Bois to report the straits he was in. The Xth Corps had just arrived there from Pithiviers. General von Kraatz immediately marched in the direction of Neuville with the five battalions, three squadrons and two batteries of the 20th Division that were at Ronville.

At the very beginning of the march darkness and a heavy snowfall set in. Suddenly a fierce fire was opened upon the battalion of the advanced guard (1st battalion of the 92nd Brunswickers). The battalion rushed forward and ejected the enemy out of his shelter-trenches; some of them entered the town of Neuville, some lost themselves in the labyrinth of gardens and walls. In the town the contest receded again; the men could not recognize each other; already the troops had attacked their own friends. General von Kraatz therefore stopped the fight and returned to Ronville.

But the French garrison of Neuville would not wait for the vicissitudes of the following day and retired to Rebréchien, falling in its retreat, as already mentioned, into the hands of the IIIrd Corps.

In the morning hours of the 3rd of December the 2nd Division of the XVth French Corps stood on both sides of the great road north of Artenay, ready to cover the march of the 3rd Division. It numbered 30 guns and, in 19 battalions, about 17,000 muskets.

The bulk of the IXth German Corps was moving along the highway from Château-Gaillard, with a small flank-guard, past Dambron, against the French Division, whilst the 22nd Division and the 2nd Cavalry Division between Baigneaux and Poupry were preparing to join in the engagement. After a feeble defence the French evacuated Dambron and deployed their whole artillery north-east of Artenay.

Eight batteries of the IXth Corps faced them in front whilst the artillery of the 22nd Division and the 2nd Cavalry Division opened an extraordinarily effective flanking fire from the direction of Morâle. Against so great a superiority the French could not hold out long. Their artillery had to leave, soon followed by the infantry, which even now had been thrown into great disorder by the German shells. Even in its main position by Artenay it did not venture to offer any considerable resistance. The place itself was taken with hardly any loss and without trouble, and 1000 unwounded prisoners fell into the hands of the Germans.

Whilst the 18th Division was making ready at Artenay for a further advance, the French Division had occupied the line Moulins-d'Auvillers—Creuzy—La-Croix-Briquet, intending here once more to make a stand. At the same time they tried to recapture Arblay-Ferme, which had been taken by the 84th hastening on in front of the main body of their division. But in vain. And when finally the German artillery advanced by way of Artenay, and the batteries of the 22nd Division once more fell upon the flank and rear of the whole French Division, then the whole body of the French rolled back to Chevilly. The only serious infantry engagement which took place was at Moulin-d'Auvillers, which had to be stormed with heavy loss by the 84th Regiment.

Between 4 and 5 o'clock 22 German batteries deployed in a grand curve from south of Chevaux to east of Croix-Briquet, against the main position of the French at Chevilly, which was strongly entrenched and armed with eight heavy marine-guns. The French artillery resolutely accepted the unequal combat, but speedily succumbed. Nevertheless Prince Frederick Charles would not expose the infantry of the IXth Corps and of the 22nd Division to the vicissitudes of a nocturnal struggle for the possession of Chevilly which was entrenched, and accordingly he ordered the cessation of the fight. The 18th Division bivouacked at and to the rear of the village of La Croix-Briquet. The 22nd Division was also just on the point of forming a bivouac, when the report came in that Chevilly was evacuated by the enemy. They immediately seized the place, and captured numerous prisoners and the marine artillery abandoned by the French.

The 17th Prussian followed by the 2nd Bavarian Division of Infantry had marched by way of Murville and Beaugency without meeting the enemy. At last at Chevaux the 17th Division was unexpectedly fired upon from Doney and Les Francs. After a severe struggle both the villages were captured and retained.

The 1st Bavarian Division of Infantry moving round via Sougy, received a counter-attack delivered from the direction of L'Encornes by Barry's Division of the XVIth Corps, which desired to bring relief to the hard-pressed 1st Division of the XVth Corps at Chevilly. The Bavarians repulsed the feeble attempt, and in a further onset took Trogny. They passed the night at and to the rear of La Provenchère, and the 17th Division in and near Château-Chevilly.

On the extreme right wing the 8th Cavalry Brigade together with the 3rd Bavarian Regiment of Infantry and a Battery had advanced by way of Orgères towards the Conie stream, to cover the right flank of the Germans. The battalion of the advanced guard encountered at Varize greatly superior forces of the XVIIth Corps, repulsed their assaults and compelled them to retreat towards Châteaudun.

With a loss of 51 officers and 610 rank and file, the Germans had, on the 3rd of December, secured an entrance into the forest of Orleans, and in doing so inflicted considerable injury on two Divisions of the XVth French Corps.

On the evening of the 3rd of December the XVIIIth Corps of the French stood round Boiscommun, and their XXth round Nibelle. The 1st Division of the XVth Corps had retreated towards Orleans by way of Loury, the 2nd held Cercottes, the 3rd Gidy. The Divisions of the XVIth Corps lay at Boulay, Bricy and St. Pérary, having pushed forward one brigade as far as Patay; the XVIIth was situated between St. Sigismond and Coulmiers and occupied Châteaudun.

The IIIrd and the IXth German Corps and the Army Section had wedged themselves into the threefold superior mass of the Army of the Loire. The IIIrd Corps as far as Loury, and the others as far as Provenchère and Chevilly. On both sides considerable forces outflanked them, but their enemy had been hit so hard at Beaune-la-Rolande and at Loigny, that little more was to be apprehended from him.

THE 4TH OF DECEMBER.

General d'Aurelle de Paladines had witnessed the contest at Chevilly, and was so little edified by the state of his troops that he abandoned all hope of retrieving his position; but for a retreat too circumstances were inauspicious. To re-enter Orleans

with his whole force could not be thought of. Trains and fugitives had blocked all the roads; the small number of bridges over the Loire at Orleans might lead to a dire catastrophe, seeing that the Germans would hotly pursue, and that there were no longer any troops which could be relied upon to check them till the passage of the river was effected. When now in the course of the evening General Chanzy asked leave to march on the morrow with the XVIth and XVIIth Corps upon Beaugency, d'Aurelle's resolve was quickly taken. He ordered Bourbaki on the day following to cross the Loire at Gien with the XVIIIth and XXth Corps, the XVth should retreat slowly to Orleans and Chanzy diverge towards Beaugency. The Delegation at Tours indeed made every effort to retain d'Aurelle in his present position, but he remained firm and answered with some degree of severity: "I, who am on the spot, must be much better able to judge of the state of affairs than you."

The Germans were, on the 4th of December, to continue their advance upon Orleans. The IIIrd Corps was assigned the road Loury—Orleans, and had to provide security towards the east; the IXth Corps, followed by the Xth by way of Chevilly, was ordered to make an enveloping attack upon Cercottes. Its right wing was followed by the Division of Cavalry. Of the Army Section, the 17th Division, afterwards joined by the 22nd Division and the Division of Cavalry, was ordered to capture Gidy: the 1st Bavarian Corps was directed to march upon Orleans by way of Janvry; the 4th Division of Cavalry was to cover the right flank of the Army Section, and leave one brigade at Patay with the 3rd Bavarian Regiment of Infantry for information and security towards the west.

We will now follow the events of the 4th of December, again starting from the German left wing.

The 5th Division of the IIIrd Corps marched by way of Vennecy, the 6th on the main road, both upon Orleans. The 5th Division had again detached a body to its left flank, and this had at about 2 o'clock just reached its place of destination, Chécy on the Loire, when the report suddenly arrived that strong columns of the enemy were approaching from the east. In the course of the day General d'Aurelle had once more waveringly returned to his original resolve, and made the attempt, after all, to call up all his corps into the neighbourhood of Orleans; thus it was that the XXth Corps on the way to Orleans had arrived by way of Chambon at Fay-aux-Loges. Although the flank detachment only numbered two battalions (of the 8th), it unhesitatingly encountered the superior forces of the enemy, which were deploying from Pont-aux-Moines against Chécy. The bold bearing of this small force so impressed General Crouzat that he thought he had a whole German Army before him, and speedily turned aside to Jargeau, where he crossed the Loire. The troops of the 5th Division hastening to the assistance of their flank detachment could only send their bullets after him. Other portions of the division had got as far as St. Loup, where, however, they came across strong entrenchments for infantry and heavy artillery, which it was not possible at once to take possession of.

The 6th Division had pushed forward along the main road as far as Boigny and there entered the labyrinth of houses, vineyards, walls and hedges which form the immediate environs of Orleans and were occupied by the troops of Martin de Pallières' Division. The resistance was easily overcome as far as Vaumainbert; but this village had been long prepared for defence with all the arts of war, and was so situated that

the German artillery could not be brought to bear on it. The best troops of the division, an old regiment of the Line, two battalions of Marines, two marching Rifle-Battalions, reinforced by a regiment of Mobiles had here firmly established themselves for a resolute defence. House after house had to be taken from the brave Marines, all tactical formation being impossible; a wild tumult of individual combats ensued, in which the old battle-fury of the Brandenburgers was heroically displayed. This was no longer a battle under the control of a commander, but a blazing of Teutonic battle-joy. Vaumainbert was captured, and the last desperate counter-attack of the French, undertaken in the dusk of evening, was hurled back.

In the evening the IIIrd Corps encamped with its advanced troops at Vaumainbert and St. Jean-de-Braye; it had on the 3rd and 4th December made a complete wreck of the finest division of the Army of the Loire. In a difficult wooded country, without room for deployment and without free view of the field, separated by a long distance from the main Army, threatened from the east by Bourbaki's force of at least 50,000 men, General von Alvensleben had with unshaken audacity, driving his brave enemy before him, arrived at the very gates of Orleans. With his strong hand, confident of victory, he had plucked a fresh laurel-wreath for himself and his Brandenburgers and entwined it in the superabundantly rich garland of Brandenburg glory.

On the morning of the 4th of December the 2nd and 3rd Divisions of the XVth French Corps had assembled in the position Cercottes-La Souche and Gidy, which had for a long time been prepared and entrenched; the 2nd Division stood on their right, the 3rd on their left. By the mill of Gidy a heavy battery of eight 5.5" guns had been constructed. Against this the march of the 18th Division was directed. Its van, the 85th Regiment, expelled the enemy's advanced troops from the wood south of Chevilly, but could not at first get beyond the southern edge of this. A counter-attack made with considerable forces failed. Meanwhile the 3rd French Division (Peytavin) had departed and, before the approach of the advanced guard of the 17th Division of Infantry through Cuny, had evacuated the heavy battery of Gidy. Then there arrived grave news from the Bavarians, and the 17th Division was forced to march off to the west, leaving the IXth Corps to fight out the contest at Cercottes by itself. Five German batteries opened fire against the now exposed left wing of the 2nd French Division, without, however, producing any marked change in the state of affairs. At last the 35th Brigade of Infantry arrived east of the railway embankment. After a short preparatory fire the 36th Regiment and the 9th Battalion of Jägers attacked Cercottes at about 11 o'clock and took the village after a two hours' obstinate fight at close quarters. The 85th, who were at the edge of the forest, no sooner perceived the attack of the 35th than they also rushed straight on and drove out the enemy from his obstinately defended position.

The 18th Division, pushing forward south of the forest, arrived on the ground where the 2nd Bavarian Division had fought on the 11th of October, and the combat accordingly took a similar form. West of the line of railway the 11th, east of it the 36th Regiment fought their way toilsomely from house to house, from garden to garden. When dusk set in they approached the main position of the French, which embraced the railway station of Les Aubrays and, extending along the railway lines to Gien and Tours, was defended by strong shelter-trenches, and two marine batteries numbering together eighteen heavy guns. In a sanguinary conflict the station was at

last stormed, and by 6 o'clock in the evening the last Frenchman was ejected. Further west German progress was arrested by the French shelter-trenches. General von Manstein now stopped the fight. The Hessian detachment of Von Winckler, which had fought on the 3rd of December at Neuville-aux-Bois, had rejoined its corps via St. Lyé. Among the French the incessant retreating contest had created the direst confusion, which the IXth Corps was unable to fully utilize owing to the darkness and to the nature of the country, over which it was impossible to gain a general view. They were unable to perceive that Martineau's Division was wholly broken and deprived of all power of resistance.

Barry's Division of the XVIth French Corps stood strongly entrenched at Boulay, to cover the retreat of the XVIth and XVIIth Corps.

The 1st Bavarian Corps moved from La Provenchère in the direction upon Janvry, took Bricy after a slight engagement, and then moved up between Bricy and Janvry to attack Boulay. Suddenly they were surprised by the news that strong columns of the enemy were advancing from St. Pérary upon Coinces. General Chanzy had been informed that d'Aurelles had changed his plans and determined to fall upon the Bavarians with the XVIth and XVIIth Corps.

Threatening though this seemed, the German commanders treated it lightly. Prince Albrecht, the commander of the 4th Cavalry Division, covering the Bavarian right flank, thought that he would be able to arrest the enemy with his cavalry alone, and General von der Tann also would not stay his advance; only the 3rd Infantry Brigade was ordered to remain at Bricy with some artillery.

Meanwhile the 4th and 2nd Bavarian Infantry Brigades had of their own accord assailed the French position at Boulay. Barry's Division did not stand its ground, but dispersed in every direction, leaving six field-guns in the hands of the Bavarians. Towards one o'clock the latter had re-formed, and they continued their advance by way of Les Barres upon Ingré; they were followed by troops that had been left behind at Bricy, all danger from that quarter seeming to have disappeared. At about 5.30 p.m. their 1st Infantry Brigade had reached the suburb Madeleine, their other troops being encamped at La Chapelle and to the north of it.

Through the report that Boulay was strongly occupied by the enemy the 17th Division, as has already been stated, had been called away from Gidy towards Janvry. The 2nd Division of Cavalry also had come south from Huêtre at the trot and arrived just as Barry's Division, fleeing before the Bavarians, streamed through the country round Ormes. Like a hurricane a squadron of the 4th Hussars dashes into the enemy; a French battery is surprised and captured; the mounted batteries of the Germans greatly accelerate the pace of the fugitives; the 5th Hussars hurl themselves into the tumult and sweep from the field the French cavalry that had hastened up to the assistance of their infantry. The defeated horsemen ride down their own foot and spread terror as far as Orleans.

The 17th Division from Janvry also tried to take part with its cavalry in these engagements and then began to advance via Ormes and Pomiers. South of the forest the troops coming up by way of Pomiers had to engage in some severe conflicts with the fragments of Peytavin's Division, which, as we know, had early evacuated its position at Gidy. The exhausted French were unable to offer serious resistance to the brave Mecklenburghers and Hanse-men. Hundreds surrendered.

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ENTRY OF THE GERMANS INTO COLOGNE.

When darkness had fully set in, the heads of the division reached the first houses of Orleans, but had to halt there, as the Grand Duke had opened negotiations for the surrender of the town.

Whilst these events were in progress, the 4th Cavalry Division, which was covering the right flank of the Bavarians, had frustrated Chanzy's offensive movement upon Coinces, although it disposed of no more than two brigades. Hontheim's Brigade together with the 3rd Bavarian Infantry Regiment had, as already mentioned, been sent towards the west, and by 8 o'clock in the morning had arrived before Patay, which had been strongly occupied by the enemy and prepared for defence. Four French battalions, Tucé's Cavalry Brigade and one battery opened the fight, and the German infantry, numbering at most 900 muskets, were not immediately able to take the town, which was surrounded by defensible walls. In their repeated attempts they lost 22 per cent of their men, and not before one o'clock did the French evacuate Patay to take part in Chanzy's advance upon Coinces. This, as Prince Albrecht had correctly foreseen, soon changed into a hasty retreat to St. Pérvy, and this was joined in by Tucé's Brigade from Patay. This latter was surprised and attacked by the 4th Cavalry Division as they were trotting on to the pursuit, and the 6th Regiment of Uhlans drove it in mad flight to near Pérvy. It was a wild and perplexing confusion. French foot-soldiers were ridden down by French horsemen, and they in their turn were shot down by French Mobiles. In a dense coil Chanzy's troops rolled on far beyond St. Pérvy.

The negotiations of the Grand Duke, concluded before midnight, led to the evacuation of Orleans by the French. At 12.30 a.m. the 17th Division with the Grand Duke and General von Treskow at its head, made their entry into the city. Beneath the statue of the Maid of Orleans, the protectress of France, the German Soldier-Prince drew up and let his troops file past him. The moon shone forth from amidst the clouds and lit up the pale emaciated countenances of the men, but their eyes flashed boldly, and heavily their steps resounded on the paving of the conquered Royal City. An hour later the 2nd Bavarian Infantry Brigade also arrived. General von der Tann and his Staff had hastened on in front and joined the Grand Duke.

The aspect of the city was very peculiar. In the suburbs all was dark and silent as death, but on approaching the city one gained more and more the impression of being in the midst of the French Army. The houses were lit up and filled with French soldiers, some of whose arms had already been collected ready to give up. On the pavements at the sides of the streets unarmed foot-soldiers lay about so fast asleep that even the exulting music of the bands of the 17th Division did not wake them. Whole companies, crouched in the squares round bivouac fires, assembled in an orderly manner upon command of their non-commissioned officers and laid down their arms. The behaviour of the officers appears to us Germans sad and wholly inexplicable; most of them were separated from their men and had often quite roughly to be roused out of their comfortable beds in the hotels, by the German Quarter-Masters.

The numbers of prisoners made during the night far exceeded the number of Germans present, but the spirit of resistance was extinguished to the last spark; the men only asked for rest, sleep and shelter from the icy wind that swept through the streets and scattered upon the houses a whirling shower of sparks from the numerous bivouac fires.

On the 5th of December at 7 o'clock the advanced guard of the IXth Corps, at 8 o'clock that of the IIIrd Corps, began their entry into the city, not without some slight contests with stragglers.

Orleans was now finally in German hands. The strongest Army, hitherto raised by Republican France, consisting of at least 200,000 men, was rent in three parts and incapable of combined action for some time to come. The XVIIIth and XXth French Corps were retreating upon Bourges. The XVth Corps which had lately fought with praiseworthy pertinacity, but was now entirely disorganized, was fleeing to La Ferté—St. Aubin; a part of Peytavin's Division had escaped to Blois and joined Chanzy's troops.



GENERAL CHANZY.

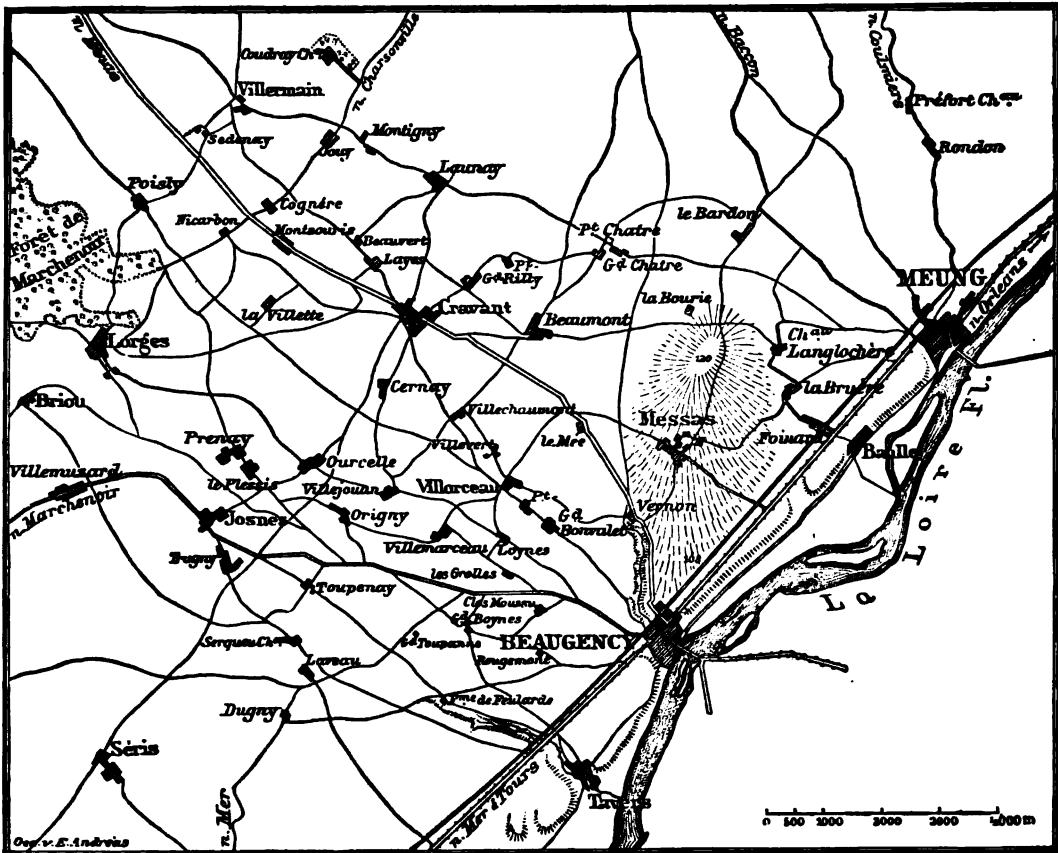
Chanzy, an exceedingly able commander, had succeeded in retaining some military bearing and tactical solidity among his sorely tried troops of the XVIth and XVIIth Corps. On the evening of the 4th of December this body of men held in comparatively good order the western edge of the forest of Marchénoir and extended as far as Beaugency. Considerable reinforcements were on the way to join them. The XXIst Corps, whose acquaintance we made during the march of the Army Section through Le Perche, when it fought so unsuccessfully and fled to Le Mans, had hastily been to some extent reorganized in Le Mans, and the heads of its columns had reached Marchénoir. General Camô hastened up from Tours with a strong Division of the newly formed XIXth Corps; part of Peytavin's Division, as we have seen above, retreating upon Blois.

The strength of Chanzy's army cannot be stated with accuracy, but we can hardly go wrong if we estimate it at 100,000 men.

THE DAYS OF BEAUGCENCY.

The Germans, though victorious, had had to suffer great hardships during the last few days. Their uniforms were largely in rags and afforded but scant protection against the cutting winds which swept over the fields and woods of the Beauce. Very early in the morning the men had had to leave their dreary quarters and spend the whole day in fighting a flood of men, which streamed in again and again in ever renewed waves as often as it was driven back. And when the gloomy winter night cast its dark shadow over the battle-fields, the only shelter they found was in an abandoned or half-burnt house, whose shivered window-panes or loose, rattling shutters gave free admission to the cold blasts from without. Here was no longer the rich Beauce, smiling in the autumnal sunlight of the month of October, with its full cellars and granaries: no; it was an exhausted desolate country, swept in warlike tempests by innumerable hosts and filled with the sorrowful traces of murderous conflicts.

The men were in urgent need of repose. Moreover, the troops of the XVth French Corps seen in Orleans seemed to present an unmistakable picture of the total dissolution of the enemy, whose main body was believed to have been forced back to Bourges. To judge by experience, an immediate pursuit might have brought in a few more trophies and a few thousand prisoners more; but these were matters of daily occurrence and not worth the necessary expenditure of blood and toil. It was obviously more advantageous to increase the efficiency of our own army, to bring up supplies of clothes and munitions of war, to restore the used up strength of the men



BEAUGENCY.

by regular meals, and to soothe the sur-excited nerves of the soldiers by repose. This was the opinion held at the German Head-Quarters, when the authorities, ignorant of the position and strength of Chanzy, ordered the immediate continuation of the pursuit only by the 6th Division of Cavalry to the south, and by the IIIrd Corps in the direction of Gien in the valley of the Loire. The Section of the Grand Duke which had suffered long and grievously from the discomforts of the last month, was not to leave its quarters before the 7th of December, and then follow on broad front the track of the enemy down the Loire. The 25th Division had been added to the

forces of the Grand Duke, for the purpose of taking up the pursuit on the left bank of the river.

The events of the last few days had inspired officers and men with the utmost confidence of victory; they all felt convinced that the whole French Army of the Loire was broken into fragments; thousands of prisoners were in the hands of the Germans; compact bodies of men had surrendered without a struggle; all the enemies encountered on the 4th and on the 5th were broken down, disheartened and filled with deep hatred of their own commanders, or in mute, apathetic despair. The Army Section looked forward to an easy pursuit, and hoped soon to reach rich districts and cities as yet little visited by the war, and affording good shelter and abundant supplies. No one anticipated the necessity of fighting more bloody, obstinate battles.

The infantry of course was largely reduced in numbers. On the 6th of December the Bavarians only numbered 10,000 muskets, the 17th Division about 5,400, and the 22nd Division about 6,000. The 25th Division being separated from the main body by the river choked with drifting ice, and unable to cross it from want of bridges, the Grand Duke was forced to meet Chanzy's Army with only 21,000 men, whilst the French were five times as numerous and in part fresh men.

Even on the 6th of December events occurred capable of raising doubts as to the strict accuracy of the views hitherto entertained about the situation. Both in the north at Ouzouer-le-Marché, and in the south in front of Meung, the German cavalry encountered strong forces of the enemy, who, leaning in the south upon the Loire, seemed to await the Germans with a firm foot, and at Ouzouer even acted on the offensive.

It was therefore audaciously, yet, on the other hand, not without hesitation, that on the 7th of December the weak Army Section began to advance on a very broad front. The 17th Division was to move upon Meung, the Bavarian Corps upon the line Villerrmain—Beaumont, the 22nd Division upon Ouzouer-le-Marché. Thus the front of the Army Section extended over a distance of about 12 English miles, its infantry numbering far less than that of a modern corps.

On the morning of the 7th the 17th Division of the Germans moved forward, singing songs, along the great highway of the Loire to Meung, by way of St. Ay. A thin drizzling rain was falling.

The right-hand edge of the Loire valley there forms a steep bank, rising in places as high as 150 feet above the level of the river, and defining the southern boundary of the slightly marked plateau between the Mauve and the forest of Marchénoir. Small rivulets descend from this plateau, burst through the edge of the heights, and stream in steep, deeply cut out gulleys towards the Loire. The slope of the high bank, which faces south, is covered with vineyards and interspersed with a series of villages, which extend from the river's brink to the top of the bank. They afford excellent *points d'appui* for defence, the attacking party being unable profitably to deploy either cavalry or artillery, or gain a general survey over the field.

Camô's French Division, numbering 19,000 men with five batteries, had occupied such a series of villages from Baulle by Foinard and La Bruère as far as Château-Langlochère, and thus barred to the 17th Division the great highway to Beaugency. To the rear of the left wing of the French stood at Villorceau the 1st Division of the XVIth, and at Villechaumont and Villevert the 1st Division of the XVIIth Corps, all ready to join in the contest.

When the Germans with the Mecklenburg Jägers leading, arrived near Meung, the French advanced troops evacuated the village and retreated to their above described main position, which was separated from Meung by some almost impassable vineyards. As the strength and numbers of the garrison soon were visible, the whole 17th Division deployed and pushed forward, toilsomely but irresistibly, against the front of the enemy, from Baulle to Langlochère. The villages were taken at the first rush, but with heavy loss. When, however, the 1st battalion of the 76th, carried away by its enthusiasm, swept forward beyond Langlochère, they were assailed from the north by vastly superior numbers and driven back upon Langlochère. It was the 1st Division of the XVIth Corps, which came up, marching by way of Le Mée, and here joined in the contest to our great peril.

Meanwhile the 1st Bavarian Division had arrived at the right wing of the 17th Division. Its 1st Brigade at Le Bardon heard the loud din of battle in the south, and immediately afterwards perceived that the flat-topped hill south of La Bourie-Ferme was being crossed by the French columns. The Bavarians marched south and directed their powerful assault upon them. Behind the left wing of their 1st Brigade their 2nd Brigade had also come up.

The French fell back, keeping up a hot fire; but now there appeared new lines of French skirmishers and columns at Beaumont and Grand-Chatre, threatening the right wing and rear of the Bavarians. The 1st Division of the XVIIth French Corps had here joined in the fight. The 1st Brigade hastily changed front from south to west and engaged the new enemy, whilst the 2nd Brigade and a few individual companies of the 1st maintained their original direction towards La Bourie. The 1st Brigade was still in the act of changing front, when it unexpectedly received a close and effective fire from a battery of ten guns south of La Bourie. At it they flew, and in a few minutes the battery was taken by two Bavarian companies, who, without firing a shot, rushed with loud shouts at the gunners. Brave lads these gunners were, and would not leave their guns, but they succumbed to the German bayonets. The Bavarians, however, soon sullenly lost these guns again, as General Camô hastened up in person with a battalion of rifles and with the 88th Regiment, his Reserve, to rescue his artillery.

Towards 5 o'clock, when a dense fog and the gloom of evening were settling over the country, yet another engagement was fought, at short range, between the Bavarians and French at Grand-Chatre. Slowly the latter gave way along the whole front. The success of the Bavarians had a favourable effect on the contest of the 17th Division at Langlochère. Here too the French quickly withdrew at the fall of night.

The Bavarians and the 17th paid very dearly for that day's work; 16 officers and more than 300 men lay dead and wounded. The French loss cannot be estimated, but appears to have been considerable, for the 59th Regiment alone lost 200 men at Langlochère, and the 1st battalion of the 27th Regiment 140 men at La Bourie.

On the right wing the 4th Division of Cavalry met considerable French forces to the west of Binas, and ascertained that the whole northern edge of the forest of Marchénoir was strongly occupied. The 22nd Division went into quarters at Ouzouer-le-Marché.

The situation had turned out to be quite different from what had been supposed. The joyous hopefulness with which they set out on their westward march had by the

evening of the 7th given way to grave anxiety. From Baulle on the Loire, as far as west of Binas, that is over a range of more than 12 miles, the feeble Army Section had encountered superior forces of the enemy, who so far from beating a hasty retreat had at times, as at Langlochère, fought very energetically and even assumed the offensive.

Obviously the resourceful dictator had prepared a stern surprise for us and barred our way by an Army which at least in part was quite fresh. Among our prisoners we met indeed old acquaintances of the XVIth and XVIIth Corps, but also a non-commissioned officer of the 59th Regiment of the Line, who asserted that he belonged to the Division of Tours, a body which was perfectly new to us. The troopers of the 4th Division of Cavalry had, moreover, captured at Marolles some deserters of the new XXIst Corps.

Again then severe struggles were in prospect, again the small band of the Grand Duke was called upon to dam back the floods and waves of the National Defence of the French. Everything depended on concentrating the widely scattered German forces, but unfortunately no hope of the immediate coöperation of the 25th Division could be entertained. On the 7th of December it had advanced on the left bank of the Loire as far as Lailly, but was still separated from the main body by the rushing torrent of the unbridged river.

On the evening of the 7th the Army Section made ready for a severe struggle for the following day. At 10 o'clock in the morning of the 8th the 17th Division was to be drawn up at Baulle; the Bavarians and the 2nd Division of Cavalry at and in front of Grand-Chatre; the 22nd Division and the 4th Division of Cavalry at Cravant. The front of the Army Section was thus to be reduced to 5 miles.

During the night of the 8th of December an icy wind had changed the dense winter fogs into driving snow-storms. The morning dawned gloomily. The bare vineyards lay like dark shadows scattered over the snow-clad landscape. From the valley of the Loire a brown mist rose, which lay heaped up spectrally over the eddying flood, and then, seized by the wind, flew in rags and strips beyond the banks, now veiling a village, and again in wide gaps revealing the outlines of the forest of Marchénoir.

It was the daybreak of a bloody day. The fate of thousands was to be decided on the narrow space stretching in front of us from Grand-Chatre to the main highway from Le Mée to Cravant and thence to the trees at the edge of the dark forest as they bent beneath the storm.

A slightly marked ridge, starting from Sedenay on the main highway, runs in the general line by Launay and Grand-Rilly to the north of Beaumont, and then again approaches the highway at Le Mée. Here the Bavarians were posted, together with the 22nd Division. Opposite, and running almost parallel with the road, extends a second ridge from Villevert past Villechaumont and Cernay towards Nicarbon and Poisly; on this the French were drawn up. These ridges are separated from each other by a flat broad valley, fully exposed both to the view and to the deadly fire of the troops on both sides; the distance between the ridges is within the effective range of artillery fire; accordingly the defence is equally advantageous to either party. A covered deployment of the attacking troops and their sudden advance is possible, but it is bloody work to make an attack and actually to carry the line of heights.

On the French side there stood round Poisly the 1st Division (Colin) and behind it the 2nd and 3rd Divisions of the XXIst Corps. Deflandre's Division of the XVIIth Corps coming from Prénay was to join on to the XXIst Corps in the neighbourhood of Montsouris, prolonging the front as far as Cernay. Here followed Roquebrune's Division of the XVIIth Corps, which had strongly occupied Villechaumont and Villevert, whilst Deplanque's Division of the XVIth Corps stood at Villemarceau. Dubois de Jaucigny's Division of the XVIIth Corps was as yet kept in reserve.

Starting at 8 o'clock the 22nd Division marched from the neighbourhood of Ouzouer by way of Villermain and Coudray-Château against the left wing of this powerful position. South of Villermain they perceived the masses of Colin's Division and wheeled in upon them. Poisly and Cognère fell after a trifling contest; the greater part of the division hastily fled to Lorges. At that favourable moment arrived the definite order of the Grand Duke to march off to Cravant. With rare skill the fight was stopped and the march upon Cravant entered upon; there the Bavarians had meanwhile got involved in a serious engagement.

As early as 11 o'clock, when the 22nd Division was still engaged near Poisly, the 1st Corps had been instructed to deploy its 2nd Division on the above-mentioned ridge from north of Beaumont as far as Le Mée; the rest of the corps was to be retained at Grand-Chatre as reserve of the Army Section. The feeble 2nd Division (4400 bayonets and 36 guns) were just in the act of deploying, when a powerful attack by Roquebrune's Division came streaming down the ridge held by the French at Villechaumont and Cernay. Supported by a heavy artillery-fire, dense lines of skirmishers, followed by a second line, descend upon Beaumont. Two Bavarian battalions succeed in the nick of time in reaching the village. Under their fire and the shells of the Bavarian artillery the onset of the French collapses. The 2nd Bavarian Division immediately follows it up by a plucky counter-attack, and they succeed in reaching the road from south-west of Beaumont as far as Le Mée and in establishing themselves there, albeit with heavy loss.

Meanwhile Deflandre's Division had, in obedience of orders received, started from Prénay, so as to close up the gap between the XXIst Corps at Poisly and Roquebrune's Division. When their commander perceived the severe engagement at Cravant he turned towards it; but he had hardly finished his change of front, when he beheld the 22nd Division moving upon Cravant by way of Jouy. His division was accordingly divided into two portions; part made front towards the north and occupied Beauvert and Layes, the other part forcibly entered Cravant and poured a destructive flanking fire upon the Bavarians fighting along the road; already they begin to yield, when the timely succour of the 2nd Bavarian Brigade from the reserve arrests them; the 22nd Division advancing with great energy takes Beauvert and Layes, and jointly with a Bavarian battalion they turn the French out of Cravant. All attempts of their brave commander, Deflandre, to re-capture the place from the Thuringians and Bavarians are frustrated; he himself is mortally wounded, the chief of his Staff, Burr-Porter, an American soldier of fortune, is shot dead.

The successes of the 22nd Division did not fail to re-act upon Roquebrune's Division which was facing the Bavarians. Hosts of fugitives were already streaming back upon Origny and Ourcelle, where the Reserve of the XVIIth Corps, Dubois' Division, was posted, and this, perceiving the clear indications of the wavering of the first line, began to advance upon Villechaumont.

The Grand Duke to exploit the success of his right wing had already pushed forward his last Reserve, the 1st Bavarian Brigade, into the thin first line at Beaumont, in order to advance upon the height of Villechaumont. With an impetuous rush they take the village, but Dubois' Division arrives, and being reinforced by part of the XVIth Corps drives back upon Beaumont the small exhausted body of Bavarians, inflicting heavy losses and even recapturing Le Mée, which had been held so long.

Already it began to grow dark; the Bavarian batteries, having suffered grievous losses, had been compelled to limber up, and the German centre seemed to be broken through; but whilst the energy of the French, spite of their success, seemed to be spent, the Bavarian battalions steadfastly closed up their ranks and kept showing a bold front to the enemy, till in despair he gave up all attempt to break down such stubborn resistance and, himself streaming back, evacuated Mée and Villechaumont and surrendered this prize of victory to the Bavarians, closely following upon his heels.

Meanwhile the 22nd Division had been forced to evacuate Layes; but the enemy, probably supported by a fresh Division of the XXIst Corps, was still unable to make any further progress.

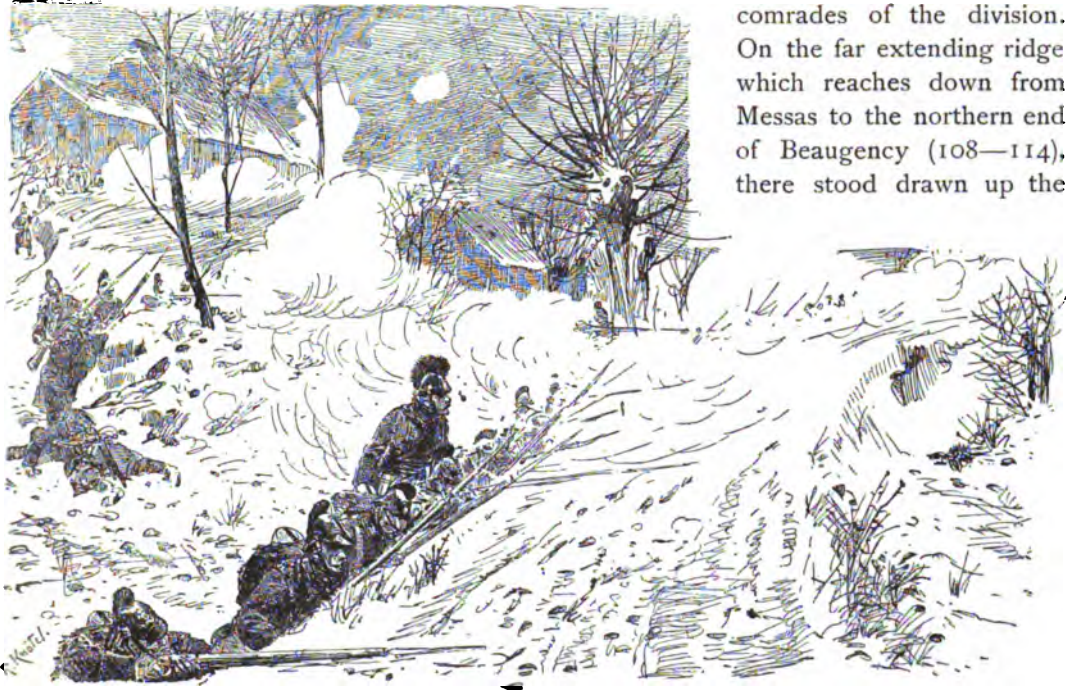
The 17th Division had also been victorious. Its opponent of the 7th, General Camô, could not make up his mind to attempt on the 8th, according to his orders, the reconquest of the position Baulle—Langlochère, which he had lost on the previous day. He had lost confidence in his men and thought that he might render service only by remaining on the defensive. He therefore chose a position in a semicircle open to the south-east round Beaugency, which lay deep below in the valley of the Loire. His left wing stood at Messas, his centre in the vineyard north of Beaugency, his right on the plateau of Rougemont, and almost up to the Loire. Beaugency itself was only occupied with an inadequate force. Barry's Division of the XVIth Corps formed the Reserve, but its main force remained behind at Mer.

Owing to the dense fog in the morning hours, and to the fact that the ground was impassable to cavalry, the 17th Division was unable to perceive what great advantages might be gained by an attack *en masse* upon Messas. On the contrary, when at about 11 o'clock the Grand Duke's order to advance arrived, the bulk of the division marched on the roads to Beaugency, into the loop formed by the enemy; only a small flank guard marched past Villeneuve and attacked Messas. There was posted Camô's best regiment, the 59th marching Regiment, that up to then had suffered but slight losses, on the 7th, and with it the Francs-tireurs de l'Ain. The two feeble Hanseatic battalions of the flank guard succeeded in the first onset in forcing their way into Messas, notwithstanding this overwhelming superiority of numbers. But now there ensued a fierce house-to-house struggle against the French, who defended themselves with great resolution. Not till dusk was Messas entirely in German hands.

Meanwhile a part of the advanced guard of the division had, after a slight contest, entered Beaugency from the riverside, but were only able to storm the exit towards Blois and the railway-station, as darkness was setting in. Through these contests about the *points d'appui* of the two wings of the enemy, it had also been perceived by the main body of the 17th Division, marching on the highway, that considerable forces of the French were on their right flank. The vineyard north of the town seemed to be specially strongly occupied, and parts of the vanguard had moved against it,

without, however, making any progress at first; but now the 2nd battalion of the 90th Regiment, which had only just arrived from Toul, appeared on the battle-field. Officers and men were still inspired by the impetuous and warlike passion, which a protracted campaign gradually tones down and to some extent supplants by cool reflection. Loudly singing, the extended companies rushed upon their far more numerous foe, anxious with a rapid grip to secure a small branch of the laurel which

so abundantly adorned their comrades of the division. On the far extending ridge which reaches down from Messas to the northern end of Beaugency (108—114), there stood drawn up the



BAVARIANS AT THE BATTLE OF BEAUGENCY.

whole French Regiment of Mobiles de l'Isère (the 27th). They delivered a short disorderly fire, then a few brave officers endeavoured to steady the troubled lines, but all in vain; in full flight the Mobiles rushed down the steep descent to the brook at their rear, till an energetic counter-attack of the French Reserves arrested the advance of the Mecklenburg Fusiliers. The tangled vineyards being very impassable and the fog falling again at 3 o'clock prevented the 90th Regiment from exploiting their advantage more fully.

The night set in quickly. The 17th Division occupied the ground from Messas as far as Beaugency. A regular panic seemed to prevail among the enemy; a French battery drove right into the midst of the Germans and was captured; Vernon, still full of Frenchmen, succumbed to a nocturnal assault and 250 men there laid down their arms. The fragments of Camô's Division were scattered about from Villorceau to Mer, their leader himself was wounded and replaced by General Tripart.

On the whole the success gained turned out not to have been decisive enough to admit of commencing the pursuit on the following day, as the Grand Duke in his

order for the 9th had supposed. It is true that the Bavarians and Thuringians had struck at the main force of the enemy and driven part of it back and kept part in check, but still the French had at their disposal numerous forces which as yet had suffered little or no loss whatever from casualties in battle. This circumstance was decisive for the enemy's power of resistance. The young French soldier went full of patriotic ardour to battle, so long as he knew it but slightly or not at all: but the scenes of a bloody fight, so wearing to mind and body, he could not endure; he was easily subject to panic, which could only be counteracted by bringing some more inexperienced men into the field. This is precisely what happened on this occasion. The XXIst Corps had so far been but slightly engaged, and the XVIIth also possessed some brigades which were quite fresh; the 1st Division of the XVIth Corps, which also was present, had, it is true, suffered severely in the earlier battles of the month of December, but it consisted of sturdy, seasoned soldiers. Only Camô's Division was entirely broken up.

The Commanders-in-Chief on both sides, the Grand Duke and Chanzy, ordered offensive movements for the following day. The Germans wanted to pursue in the direction upon Tours, the French wanted to reconquer Beaugency, but both parties soon discovered that their plans were not feasible.

Of Camô's column there were only fragments left, which assembled piecemeal in the valley of Tavers. The 59th Regiment, which had been driven out of Messas on the 8th, was the only one that did not take to flight, but had joined the XVIth Corps at Bonvalet. Thence at 8 o'clock the next morning it made a surprise assault upon Vernon, but was bloodily repulsed by the 2nd battalion of the 75th.

During the night Chanzy had been informed of the state of things with Tripart's column. Anxious lest the enemy should break from Beaugency through his line between Tavers and Villorceau he had ordered the 1st Division of the XVIth Corps to draw back as far as Tripart's left wing, somewhere near Grand Toupanne. The XVIIth Corps at Origny and Ourcelles, and the XXIst, which stood deployed as far as near Poisly, were by offensive movements to cover the march of Deplanque's Division. These offensive movements were entered upon early in the morning at 6 o'clock, when it was still quite dark, and alarmed primarily the 2nd Bavarian Division encamped at Villechaumont—Le Mée and Beaumont, now reduced to only 4000 men, although they had on the evening of the 8th of December been reinforced by a draft of 1000 men from home.

The attack of the French was frustrated by the steady fire of the Bavarians at Le Mée; but at Villechaumont, the situation was getting very grave, when the heads of the 22nd Division made their appearance in the nick of time. This Division was to have relieved the Bavarians at Beaumont. One of its brigades, the 43rd, had been marching since 6 o'clock in the morning from Launay upon Beaumont, and the other (the 44th) was holding the line Beauvert—Layes—Cravant, where they were in very close touch with the enemy's outposts. With the help of the 43rd Brigade the possession of Cernay and Villechaumont was made safe by about 10 o'clock; the 13th Bavarian Regiment at once marched on to Villevert and the 12th Regiment captured Villorceau by a resolute assault.

Whilst the 43rd Brigade thus brought to the Bavarians the desired assistance, the 44th was exposed to danger. In consequence of a misunderstanding it had

evacuated Beauvert and Layes. Immediately both places were occupied by masses of the XXIst Corps of the French, which then seriously threatened from the north the Prussian Brigade assembled at Cravant. The 1st Bavarian Brigade was just assembling at Grand-Rilly and its Commander, Von Orff, of imperishable memory in the army, joyfully seized this opportunity to repay to the 44th Brigade the service the 43rd Brigade had just rendered to the 2nd Division of the Bavarians. Without firing a shot two battalions of the 2nd Bavarian Brigade, commanded by the brave Colonel Schmidt, stormed Layes and Beauvert and put the enemy to flight.

The 1st Bavarian Division now wholly deployed along the line Montigny—Layes, nevertheless upon the distinct orders of the Grand Duke abstained from all further advance, although the XXIst French Corps which faced them, and had taken Villermain, showed little inclination to act on the offensive. Why, 4600 Bavarians were opposed by 40 battalions of the XXIst Corps, numbering at a low estimate 45,000^{*} men. Also in front of the 22nd and the 2nd Bavarian Divisions the contest came to an end in the afternoon in consequence of the retreat of the XVIIth Corps, whose right wing joined at Serqueu Château on to Deflandre's Division of the XVIth Corps.

Meanwhile the 17th Division had fought a bloody engagement. Whilst the Bavarians were fighting at Villorceau, orders had arrived to fall upon the right flank of the French in the direction by Grand-Bonvallet. They set to work. In the face of the French masses the advanced guard of the division had to remain behind the valley of Tavers, east of Rougemont, fronting south-west. The main body took possession of Les Grolles and Boynes, without meeting with any resistance from the XVIth French Corps, which was just marching away. Villemarceau was also reached, and maintained against the attempts of the XVIIth Corps to support the retreat of the XVIth by making isolated assaults upon the Germans.

Although the Grand Duke had ordered that, on this part of the field also, the ardour of the troops should be restrained as much as possible, still two battalions (F/75, II/76), who had just arrived at Clos-Moussu, allowed themselves to be so carried away by the favourable state of affairs, as to advance to the assault of Ferme-de-Feularde. Their example took effect on the forces holding Les Grolles and Boynes; advancing at the double they reached the valley of Tavers, which was prepared for defence and commanded along the whole of its extent by mitrailleuses planted on the line of railway. There they were met by the fire of Bourdillon's Brigade of the XVIth Corps. But the Hanseatic troops paid no heed to their losses and overthrew Bourdillon's Brigade. Now the 1st Brigade of the XVIIth Corps from Toupenay endeavoured to make front towards the south. Tripart's Artillery bombarded Ferme-de-Feularde from the south, and parts of Bourdillon's Brigade, that had not yet been engaged, turned upon the farm from the direction of Dugny. It was all in vain; with the cool resolution peculiar to the North-Germans these brave battalions at decisive ranges crushed all the attacks made upon them; with an iron hand they held fast what they had gained, till darkness put an end to the fight. This had cost the 17th

^{*} The numbers of the 2nd Brigade of Colin's Division are known to us, and it is perfectly permissible to judge of the rest of the forces at least by this standard, seeing that they had seen less fighting than Colin's battalions. On the 9th of December this brigade numbered more than 10,000 men in seven battalions.

Division 10 officers and 230 rank and file, who fell almost exclusively in the assault on Ferme-de-Feularde.

As already mentioned, on the 9th of December the Grand Duke had given repeated orders to act on the defensive. This was on account of the entirely altered view of the situation, which was now entertained by Prince Frederick Charles partly in consequence of the course of events and partly in consequence of distinct instructions received from the Great Head-Quarters. There was no longer any doubt of it, that the French power of resistance on the Loire was centred in Chanzy's Army, which owing to its enormous superiority of numbers the Army Section was never able wholly to crush. Prince Frederick Charles therefore moved the IIIrd Corps, which had been sent to Gien, to Orleans, and the Xth Corps stationed at Orleans was ordered to

proceed at once to take part in the operations about Beaugency. The head of this reinforcement only got as far as Meung on the 9th of December, and the Grand Duke wanted to await its arrival before he resumed the offensive.

On the left bank of the Loire the 25th Division, continuing its advance, had gained a brilliant success. The advanced guard of the Hessians had pressed forward as far as St. Dié, south of Mer, driving before them the troops of Morandy's Division (XVIth Corps), had finally also captured Montlivant and bloodily repulsed some powerful counter-attacks. Whilst a part of the enemy hastened back to Blois, Jobey's Brigade made arrangements to pass the night in the park of Chambord as in times of perfect peace. They were surprised by 50 men of the 4th Hessian Regiment at about 6 o'clock in the evening and driven away in mad flight. The gallant Hessians captured 200 prisoners, 5 guns, 12 ammunition-



GENERAL V. WITTICH.

waggon and 60 horses. The terror of this audacious surprise was spread by the fleeing Mobiles as far as Tours, and the fragments of the brigade could not be assembled before they had reached Limoges.

On the 10th of December Prince Frederick Charles personally assumed the chief command at Beaugency.

This day was assigned as a day of rest to the severely tried Army Section. The Bavarian Corps, which stood most in need of reintegration and repose, was to garrison Orleans. The offensive was to be resumed on the 10th of December by the Xth Corps on the right bank of the Loire pushing as far as Mer, and the IXth Corps on the left bank as far as Blois.

Of all commanders the Grand Duke had had the most varied experience of the

manner of fighting adopted by the French republican masses, and he clearly saw how difficult it was with inadequate forces to gain decisive successes against armies perpetually renewed. He therefore would not render the coöperation on the 10th of December of the 17th and 22nd Divisions impossible, and placed the former in quarters at Les Grolles and Clos-Moussu and the latter at Cravant, Cernay and Bonvalet, so as to be ready to support the Xth Corps. The Bavarians were encamped behind the 22nd Division, and most of them were ordered to march off as early as the 10th of December to Orleans.

On the French side, General Chanzy, with remarkable pertinacity, would not admit himself to be sufficiently defeated to compel him

on the 10th to effect a retreat; on the contrary he determined to continue his resistance. The XX1st Corps was withdrawn into the line Poissy—Lorges—Briou, the XVIIth was to recover Origny early in the morning, and Deflandre's Division and Tripart's column were to defend the valley between Grand-Taupanne and Tavers. To the rear of the troops thus disposed the cavalry was distributed with a view to checking any possible attempts of the infantry to run away.

Early in the morning, at 7 o'clock, when it was still dark, the 3rd Division of the XVIIth Corps actually succeeded by a skilfully conducted onset of heavy masses, both in driving out the garrisons of Origny and Villejouan, which together consisted of only three companies, and in occupying Villemarceau. The 22nd Division then deployed on the level ridge north of Cernay. Against this a hot artillery fire was directed at daybreak from the heights of Ourcelle, Le Plessis and La Vilette. General von Wittich, whose right wing would have been greatly imperilled by the departure of the Bavarians, hastened to General von der Tann to ask him to continue his support; but at the very first cannon-shot General von der Tann had of his own accord arrived at the self-evident conclusion that he must not on the day of battle leave his old comrade in arms in the lurch; Launay was already occupied by the Bavarians, and the 2nd Brigade was making ready to cover the right wing of the Thuringians at Beauvert and Layes. Moreover, the 4th Brigade moved up to Villechaumont and the Reserve north of Beaumont.

Villemarceau was occupied by the 17th Division which had assembled at Villorceau. When at about 10 o'clock the Grand Duke appeared on the battle-field the Army Section stood comparatively closely concentrated between Beauvert and Villemarceau, and all danger here was removed.



THE HANSEATIC TROOPS IN VILLEJOUAN.

In the centre and on the right wing no further engagements of any moment took place. The XXIst Corps of the French certainly did attempt making attacks from Villermain and Coudray Château, but the men were paralyzed in presence of the fire of the Corps Artillery of the Bavarian and Xth Corps. In the afternoon both these places could be occupied.

With the 17th Division matters looked more serious. After the capture of Villemarceau they had attacked the village of Villejouan. At the first assault the fusiliers of the 76th (Lübeckers) reached the edge of the village, which had to be taken from the French in a fierce house-to-house fight, whilst dense columns were hurrying up from Origny for relief of the place. Just at the right time the 1st battalion of the 76th (Hamburgers) arrived and met the danger victoriously. The 2nd battalion of the 76th also quickly came up towards Villejouan and repulsed the last thrust of the French, made with at least ten battalions; the losses of the fugitives were largely increased by the fact that many of the 76th used the chassepot rifles, which had been taken from the prisoners, to fire after them. With imminent danger a cart laden with cartridges needed for the supply of the men was dragged into the burning village, and now again the needle-guns were in full activity. But dense bodies of the French continually keep re-assembling in the neighbourhood of Josnes, distinctly visible like a thunder-cloud, from the heights of Villemarceau.

Suddenly a horseman at full speed gallops up on to the flat hill of Villemarceau; it is Major von Körber, the enterprising, indefatigable commander of the horse-artillery field-division of the Xth Corps. At a swinging trot his batteries follow, and now the guns of the 17th Division also come up, and speedily a well-directed hail of iron is discharged from the concentrated batteries upon the minatory thunder-cloud at Josnes. It is dissipated and scattered like the mists of the Loire before the howling east wind. There is nothing more to be feared here to-day.

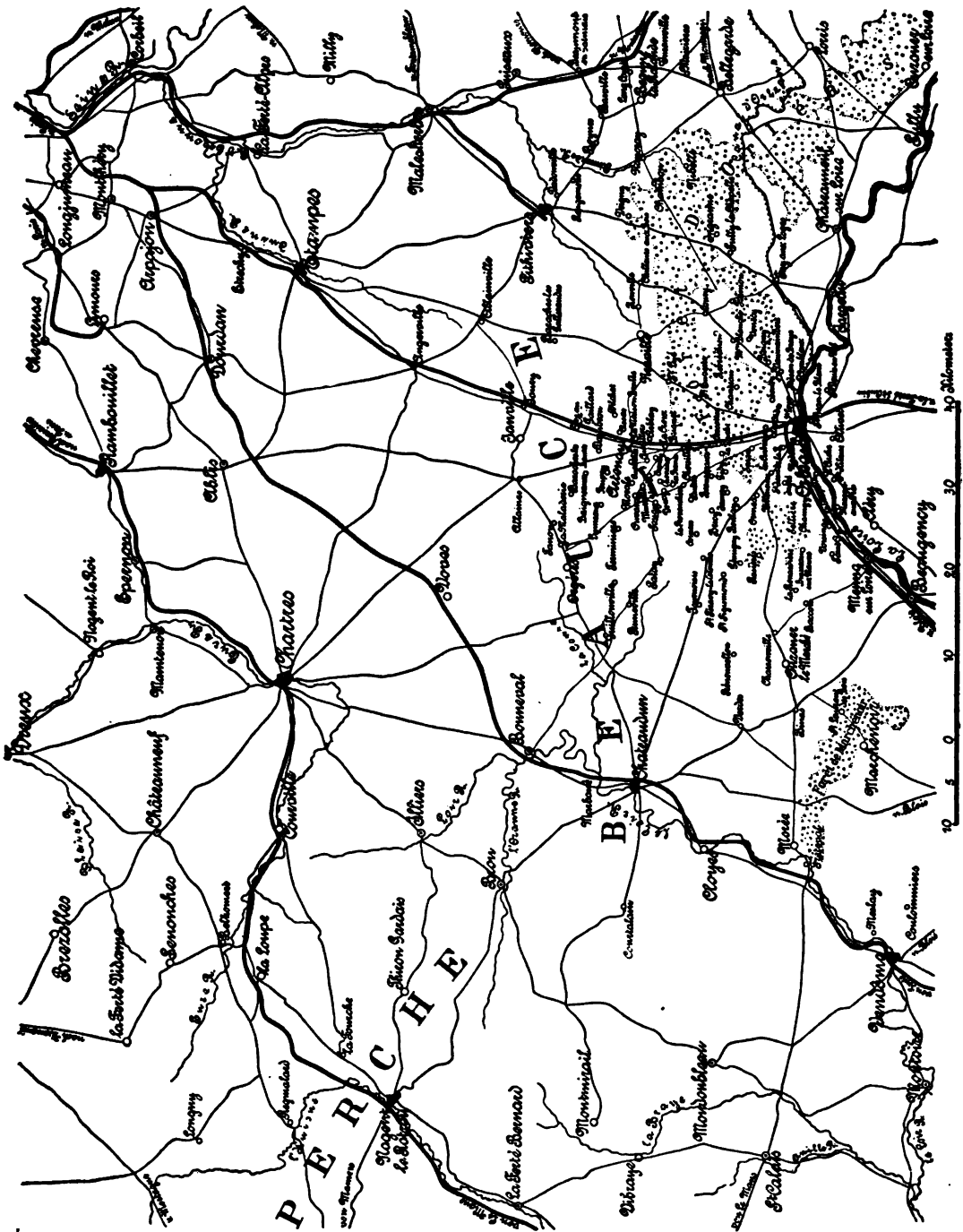
The vanguard of the Xth German Corps had reached Beaugency; the IXth Corps had pushed forward as far as Vienne opposite Blois, where they discovered that the bridge over the Loire had been blown up.

On the 12th of December Chanzzy began to retreat. He had lost all hope of overcoming the resistance of the firmly knitted German battalions with his slack-jointed hosts. Bourbaki could not be persuaded to bring up effective assistance, and from the side of Blois there threatened the danger of being assailed from the rear.

The days of Beaugency were over; dreadful days, where the inclemency of the season and the incessant danger consumed the mental and physical strength of the leaders and of the men. So great was the weight of the superior numbers of the French that often it seemed impossible even with utmost effort, self-sacrifice and determination to so much as move them from their place. Even though the German troops in the evening might have seen nothing but fleeing enemies before them, yet they found them on the morrow replaced by fresh soldiers; Chanzzy's Army, like the hydra, seemed to put forth new heads for every blow that was dealt. These are days of honour for the German soldier, days of honour for the German people, exhibiting its noblest characteristics: unshaken trust in God, iron discipline and invincible resolve to conquer were, spite of external differences, equally evinced by Thuringians and Bavarians, by Hanseatic men and Mecklenburghers.

The problem set to the Germans was to defeat the best French General, round

whose standards were collected the picked men of a brave, patriotic, self-sacrificing nation, fired by the noble resolve to free their native soil from a foreign invader.



THE SOUTH-WESTERN THEATRE OF THE WAR.

40 Km. = 25 Eng. miles.

In those days the utmost was accomplished that can be expected from a popular rising of men who have received no military training; the road by which

this result was arrived at was strewn with a hideous number of victims, who paid with their lives both for the lack of political foresight of the Rulers of France and for their own opposition to universal military discipline in time of peace.

The German troops, on the other hand, being thoroughly trained and disciplined, had by no means reached the limit of their capacity. Their greatly thinned battalions still held together in silent obedience and iron constancy, as they had done in the early days of the war, even if a beardless ensign took the place of the major and his officers who lay in their graves. Still these battalions stormed, with echoing hurrahs, entrenched villages and almost impassable vineyards, although their trusty

comrade, the artillery, had lost most of its guns in consequence of their breech mechanism being worn out.

While on the 11th of December Chanzy's Army drew off towards the west, leaving behind the roads covered with stragglers, the fields with corpses and thousands of helpless wounded in the villages; while the severest threats and the merciless charges of his own cavalry were unable to prevent wholesale desertions of his infantry, the German troops stood steadily and silently in the villages they had taken on the previous day, able and ready to beat back any and every attack made upon them. Respectfully and joyfully they returned the greetings of their beloved commanders, of the brave and ardent Von der Tann, the grave and clear-sighted Von Wittich, the active and captivating Treskow, and the noble and constant



GENERAL V. TRESKOW.

Grand Duke. A kindly fate had on this occasion placed the right men in the right places.

The victory of the Army Section was bought very dearly; it cost the loss of 136 officers and about 3300 rank and file; the feeble Bavarian Corps alone lost 88 officers and about 2000 men. Losses, if not always a criterion of achievements, are certainly a measure of sufferings endured, and this measure registered for the Bavarians since the 1st December the appalling amount of 245 officers and 5506 rank and file. One third of the Bavarian infantry of the 1st Corps and more than half of its officers lay either as corpses on the fields of the Beauce or wounded to the death in its half-burnt villages.

It was the intention of Prince Frederick Charles to give the Army Section a day of rest on the 11th of September, and to call up the Xth and IIIrd Corps to effect a decisive result. The departure of the enemy was only noticed about mid-day, and during the following days the Germans followed him in the direction of Fréteval-Vendôme on the Loir.

Chanzy had in fact effected his retreat with great skill up to and across the valley of the Loir. It may be useful here to quote from a French source a narrative of the retreat of this Second Army of the Loire, for we should learn to know war, not only superficially and according to the brilliant aspect it presents to the view of the conquerors, but rather to know it in its true form. Only when it is known as what it is, as a dreadful scourge of God, will nations be able to understand the endeavours of enlightened governments, viz., by the fullest development of the military force of the people through training them to arms in time of peace, either to avoid war altogether, or, if by fate's decree it be inevitable, at least to wage it victoriously in the enemy's country.—And now for the quotation from Lehaucourt (*Campagne de la Loire*): "On the 12th of December the Second Army of the Loire executed the movements ordered by Chanzy. The weather had completely changed, and from the earliest morning the rain was streaming down. The roads covered with ice and melting snow had become impassable, the ground sodden with the thaw was turned into a swamp. As on former days, so also on this occasion Chanzy had ordered the march so that the artillery and the trains only should use the roads, and the infantry should march in lines of columns across the fields. The movements of the Army thus became as slow as they were toilsome, and with the utmost effort they could barely move at the rate of $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles an hour. Boots and clothing were in a deplorable state in consequence of the protracted winter campaign. The pointed poles of the vineyards that had to be crossed tore the rotten cloth of the uniforms and penetrated to the skin.

"The sufferings of the men during the six days of battle from the 6th to the 11th of December had been hideous. The greater part of the men had, without adequate ¹ reason, been compelled to bivouac in bitter cold in the open plain, without any shelter and often without being able to light a fire. The troops thereby suffered much loss of bodily strength, but still more they lost the spirit of resistance. Rations, if distributed at all, were handed out to the men at a great distance from the camp and in the middle of the night. The resources of the country still unconsumed were not taken advantage of as necessity demanded; avarice ² and the absence of patriotism with a part of the people had a free hand. Thus, on the battlefield of Villorceau, a peasant obstinately refused to hand over his cattle in return for a duly drawn up requisition-certificate; next day the Germans took it from him without any compensation whatever. In another place the peasants sold a bundle of straw for 1.50 fr. (= 1s 3d); a piece of bread cost from 1 to 2 francs (10d to 1s 8d). Is it then to be wondered at that a retreat following upon days of such cruel sufferings should rapidly and wholly destroy the morale of our Army. After a brave combat of six days' duration the Army became conscious of the futility of all its efforts; efforts whose object the men could not understand; for most of them the war had now lost all meaning and purpose.

"Thus in the course of a few days the number of deserters rose to an extraordinary height. Starved, spent with weariness, broken down with disease, many fell into the hands of the enemy, and again many hastened on in front of the Army, especially after the Loir was crossed, on to Le Mans, where they hoped to find a

¹ So Lehaucourt thinks; but Chanzy knew that the undisciplined units would dissolve, if he allowed them to go into quarters.

² Zola, "La Terre."

roof, a fire and a morsel of bread; comforts which they had been deprived of ever since the beginning of November.

"There were a few units which afterwards still fought bravely, *but the Second Army of the Loire did not again offer to the Germans a resistance similar to that of the 6th to the 11th of December. Neither the losses it inflicted on the enemy nor those it itself suffered again reached similar dimensions.*"

This opinion of an intelligent adversary exhibits the performance of the Army Section in the days of Beaugency in a clearer light than we ourselves could have done. Thus there is secured to historic truth the considerable advantage of possessing a standard of comparison, by which correctly to estimate the apparently brilliant results of the January campaign against the struggles of December which were so often indecisive.

The pursuit up to the Loir, and the reports coming in whilst this was in progress, led to the supposition that Chanzy would make a fresh stand behind this small river. On the 14th of December the 17th Division had already encountered some not inconsiderable resistance at Fréteval and Morée; on the 15th the advanced guard of the IIIrd Corps did indeed drive the enemy beyond the Loir at Meslay, but the Xth Corps had been arrested on the hither side of Vendôme by superior forces.

Prince Frederick Charles anticipated a decisive battle on the Loir and ordered the close concentration of his troops, in order on the 17th to attack along the whole line. Meanwhile, however, on the 16th Chanzy withdrew to the west.

A further pursuit was not attempted, orders having come in from the Great Head-Quarters to concentrate the Second Army round Orleans, and the Army Section round Chartres. Here the troops were able to repose from their labours, to recover health and strength, and to await the filling up of their gaps by fresh recruits from home. There now ensued a lengthy pause in the warlike activity in the Loire districts.



CHAPTER XI

FROM VENDÔME TO LE MANS

By HANS VON KRETSCHMAN
General of Infantry.

THE ADVANCE TO THE BATTLE

IN the second half of the campaign, in the contest against France in arms, or, as the French prefer to call it, in "the War to the Knife," both the belligerents kept the same goal before their eyes: Paris. The one in order to dictate peace from within the walls of the conquered Capital, the other in order to gain that victory which would give to the war the long and eagerly desired change of fortune. North, east and south of Paris the patriotism of the French had raised mighty armies, as though stamped out of the ground, to press forward irresistibly to the rescue of the invested Capital and to free the sacred soil of France from the invading enemy. The German Armies posted themselves right athwart the lines of march of the advancing French, and in ever renewed contests bloodily repulsed their enemies. Only once was the investment of Paris interrupted: that was when her gates were thrown open to the conqueror.

In the months of November and December the French Army of the Loire attempted to advance from Orleans upon Paris. The battles of Beaune-la-Rolande, Loigny—Poupry, Orleans and Beaugency—Cravant forced them to abandon the attempt and to escape south, west and east. The country between the Loire and Paris remained in full possession of Prince Frederick Charles commanding his own Army as well as the Army Section of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. These forces formed the mighty barrier protecting the investing Army against attacks from the south. The thin lines of the German Army were animated by the settled conviction of their own superiority; the French hosts by eager haste and resolve to secure the victory by overwhelming numbers: host upon host of young men appear on the field, but they are untrained and unable to cope with the steady valour of the Germans. The powerlessness of raw masses against trained, disciplined and experienced troops has never been more conclusively demonstrated.

The defeated French Army had retreated across the Loir (not the Loire) and assembled behind this river; the commanders had, however, become convinced that their troops were not in a condition to continue the contest, and accordingly on the 16th of December General Chanzy ordered his Army to retreat on Le Mans. Prince Frederick Charles could not think of pursuing him. His first duty was to cover Paris, and, moreover, reports were coming in from Gien and Vierzon, announcing bold demon-

strations of the enemy, who had even attacked some detachments posted there. It was not at all impossible that Bourbaki's forces might march upon Orleans.

Prince Frederick Charles therefore concentrated his Army between Orleans and Vendôme. The Xth Corps was to hold the line of the Loir and occupy Blois; the IIIrd Corps and the 6th Division of Cavalry were to remain by Beaugency—Coulmiers; the IXth was brought to Orleans by a forced march, travelling 51 miles in 24 hours. The Army Section of the Grand Duke had been separated again from the Prince's Army, and the 1st Corps of the Bavarians transferred to the neighbourhood of Paris. This brave corps had been uninterruptedly engaged ever since the month

of September: its companies hardly numbered 100 men under one officer.

Thus it happened that Prince Frederick Charles could afford to let his men celebrate a merry Christmas, and that German Christmas trees told tales of home to German soldiers on French soil. Only the Xth Corps, in its advance upon Tours and in the neighbourhood of Vendôme, had to engage in contests in the days between the 16th of December and the 4th of January. It is a remarkable indication of the state of affairs that the inhabitants of Tours sent a deputation to request the occupation of their city by German troops so as to maintain



PRINCE FREDERICK CHARLES.

order within. The short winter days were utilized to make good the deficiencies which long marches and severe engagements are wont to cause, from mending boots to bringing up fresh men to fill up vacancies. Workshops were erected, and on the improvised drill-grounds, men were seen to practise the goose-step, a preliminary exercise as unpopular as it is indispensable for the marching capacity of our foot soldiers. We defeated the French more by our marches than by our arms; even at the beginning of the war their veteran troops could not nearly equal the marching capacity of our men.

On the 1st of January, 1871, the German Commander-in-Chief, His Majesty King William of Prussia, ordered the Second Army to advance upon the French forces that had made their presence felt west of the Loir. This instruction led to the combats during the first half of the month of January, which terminated with the brilliant

three days' battle at Le Mans. For this new campaign the Grand Duke of Mecklenburgh with his forces—namely, the newly formed XIIIth Corps, consisting of the 17th and 22nd Divisions, and the 2nd and 4th Divisions of Cavalry, was once more subordinated to Prince Frederick Charles, who at the commencement of the expedition disposed of 58,097 foot, 16,360 horses and 324 guns. According to a report that came into our possession, this Army put to flight 180,000 Frenchmen at the battle of Le Mans. During those days then the Germans throughout fought in the proportion of 1 to 3; they throughout acted on the offensive, and the advantages of the ground were always on the side of the French.

To understand the movements of Prince Frederick Charles upon Le Mans, it must be kept in mind that the three forces into which the Second Army was divided advanced upon three great highways converging upon Le Mans; these forces were: on the right wing, the XIIIth Corps with the fourth Division of Cavalry; in the centre, the IIIrd Corps followed by the IXth and the 2nd Division of Cavalry; on the left wing, the Xth Corps with the 1st and 6th Divisions of Cavalry. The shortest route, that from Vendôme by Epuisay—St. Calais—Bouloire, was assigned to the central column; the longest to the Xth Corps, which had first at La Chartre-sur-le Loir to reach the great highway Tours—Le Mans; the XIIIth Corps had to take a road nearly as long—viz., that of La Ferté-Bernard—Connerré—Le Mans. These differences in the lengths of the routes, combined with the difficulties caused by the enemy, brought it about, that the IIIrd and IXth Corps were one day's march ahead, and were the first to encounter the enemy's main force at Le Mans, whilst the neighbouring forces at the right and at the left were just that distance behind. The IIIrd and the IXth Corps daily heard far to their rear, both right and left, the artillery-thunder of their adversaries. During the evening and the night there often came, streaming in from behind, into the bivouacs and cantonments of the Germans, French soldiers retreating before the Xth and XIIIth Corps. Tacitly but confidently the soldier demands of his commander that his rear should be kept safe; on this point too the days of Le Mans bear brilliant witness of the morale of the Second Army. The eagerness to advance, both of the men and of the Generals, was never checked for one moment by the events in rear.

On the 5th of January Prince Frederick Charles assembled his forces east of the Loir. The IIIrd Corps was on the 6th to close up on Vendôme and push forward its heads as far as the valley of Azay; the IXth (excepting the Grand Ducal Hessian Division, which remained at Orleans) and the 2nd Division of Cavalry were to reach Morée on the 6th; the Xth Corps, as well as the 1st and 6th Divisions of Cavalry, who were ordered on the 5th of January to assemble along the line Vendôme—St. Amand, were to advance on the 6th to Montoire, and finally the XIIIth Corps and the 4th Division of Cavalry were on the same day to march from Chartres as far as Brou.

The greater part of the French Army had been posted at Le Mans since the 21st of December, to repose and recuperate their strength. East of the town on both banks of the Huisne stood the XXIst Corps, south the XVIth and west the XVIIth. As the villages were far from sufficient to accommodate all the troops, a great part were encamped in tents and suffered acutely from cold and snow. The hospitals were full of wounded and of patients suffering from small-pox. As a protection against surprise, strong detachments were pushed forward long distances. General Rousseau



VENDÔME.

occupied Nogent-le-Rotrou with part of the 1st Division of the XXIst Corps and numerous *Francs-tireurs*. General Jouffroy stood with the 3rd Division of the XIIth Corps, reinforced by detachments from the XVth and XVIth Corps and some regiments of cavalry, at the brook Braye, west of Vendôme; on the highway Tours—Le Mans stood General Barry, at La Chartre-sur-le-Loir, with portions of the 2nd and 3rd Division of the XVIth Corps.

Gambetta, the *de facto* Dictator of France, speaks of the Army of the Loire in the following terms: "They have all but exterminated the Mecklenburgers; Bavarians no longer exist, the rest of their Army is demoralized with exhaustion and cowardice. Let us persevere! and we shall expel these hordes! Away with them, out of our country! And with empty hands too!"—We Germans have always regarded it as the first duty of a belligerent to estimate his adversary justly and under no circumstances to detract from his merit. In not a single proclamation of our Royal Commander-in-Chief, Emperor William I of glorious memory, addressed to his troops, be it before the battle or after the victory was won, did he utter a word that would degrade the enemy, still less offend him. The French have always thought differently.

General Chanzy would have desired a simultaneous advance upon Paris both by the Army of the Loire and the Eastern Army of General Bourbaki; but his plans were not approved of because Gambetta had already decided that Bourbaki should attack Belfort, and there was nothing left to Chanzy but to act singly and independently. He began to bestir himself; on the 31st of December powerful columns of his moved upon Vendôme.

They encountered General von Kraatz (Xth Corps) who was also advancing, and they compelled him to withdraw to Vendôme. There a fierce engagement took place, especially along the railway embankment at Bel-Air-Château and Tuileries. All the onsets of the French, who were far more numerous and often outflanking their enemy,



SCENE FROM THE BATTLE AT VENDÔME.
(By permission of the Photographic Society of Berlin.)

[face p. 448.

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failed against the indomitable valour of the Germans, and their last rush, with all their force at 4 o'clock, shared the same fate. In the darkness of the evening the French withdrew beyond the range of the German fire. A few days later, before



Approximate scale : 5 Engl. miles to 1 in.

Chanzky had yet been able to determine on his subsequent line of action, the Second Army was already in full march upon him.

The country between the Loir and the Sarthe offered no advantages to the German Generals. It consists of small plateaus and irregular ridges, which not infrequently

rise to a height of 200 feet. Brooks abounding in water flow rapidly through broad valleys with steep slopes. The whole country is thickly covered with the product of an ancient civilisation, with vineyards, orchards and kitchen-gardens. The villages consist of assemblages of numerous detached massive farmhouses, among which castles rise, surrounded by extensive parks. Hedges, ditches or walls enclose almost every separate property. Everywhere small valleys are to be met with, where even mediocre troops under good cover can offer resistance. The invader rarely gets a general view of the country, even from elevated positions; he must renounce any plans of acting with large deployed masses, especially in the case of artillery; the action of cavalry is restricted to the roads, and the whole burden of the contest falls almost exclusively on the infantry. Moreover, on such ground a general guidance is rendered very difficult and each individual officer has to act on his own initiative. The roads had become so slippery that the cavalry and the artillery men had to lead their horses by the bridle, and the transmission of reports was obstructed by almost insurmountable difficulties; even Generals had to continue their march seated on a gun-carriage. Much time also was consumed in clearing away the numerous obstacles on the roads.

On the very first day of the march, on the 6th of January, all three columns of the Second Army were involved in serious engagements. The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg cleared a free path for himself by the engagement of La Fourche, and arrived at Brou and Beaumont-les-Autels, the places assigned to him. The advanced guards of both the Divisions of the IIIrd Corps, immediately after crossing the Loir, encountered such a sturdy resistance that the main forces of the corps had to be called up to their support. General Jouffroy had started on that very day for a renewed advance against the Loir and thus met the heads of the IIIrd Corps, who were also advancing.

The brook Azay, flowing from north-east to south-west, crosses meadow-lands of varying width, bordered on the west by a ridge of heights with rather steep slopes extending from Azay to Mazange, whilst the eastern edge of the valley curves upwards somewhat more gradually to a plateau of small extent. Along both edges of the valley several small villages, massive buildings and mills offer good *points d'appui* to the defender.



On the 6th of January the IIIrd Corps fought for the possession of these meadow-lands. Azay on the right, Mazange on the left wing became the foci of an embittered struggle and were not taken till the evening. According to orders, only the heads of the IIIrd Corps were to have reached the valley of the Azay on that day—it was stormed by the whole corps, with a loss of 42 officers and 442 rank and file. The advance of the Xth Corps presented the greatest difficulty, as its left flank was threatened by superior forces from Château-Renault. Vigorously fighting on both banks of the Loir, the 20th Division arrived in the evening at Montoire, its appointed place of destination. The 19th Division and the 6th Division of Cavalry had to remain for the time at St. Amand for security against

attacks; they took up a position right athwart the road and awaited the enemy—he did not put in an appearance, but the waiting cost a day.

On the 7th of January Prince Frederick Charles anticipated that by the river Braye the enemy would offer a serious resistance. The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg was therefore ordered on the 7th of January and the following days to advance upon Le Mans as far as possible in the teeth of all opposition. The IIIrd and IXth Corps received orders energetically to push on to the River Braye, and the Xth Corps was provisionally to await developments at St. Amand. The XIIIth Corps, marching along the road Nogent-le-Rotrou—Le Mans had to fight incessantly for the possession of isolated farmsteads, and dusk had set in before they reached La Ferté-Bernard, which was held by a strong force of the enemy. During the night of the 6th of January the IIIrd Corps was in close touch with the enemy in front; but before daybreak he began to retreat, being hard pressed by the pursuer along two roads; on the right by the 6th Division by the way of Epuisay, and on the left by the 5th by the way of Forton-Savigny. Simultaneously with the IIIrd Corps the IXth marched from Morée to Epuisay; being assailed from two quarters the French did not hesitate to resume their retrograde movements. Closely followed by the 12th Brigade, they turned to the river Braye and occupied all the farm-houses, which had to be taken from them in bloody hand-to-hand struggles. With colours flying, a French battalion advances along the road, but is overthrown by an attack with the bayonet. The place is taken by assault and the defenders hasten back in disorder to St. Calais.

During the 7th of January the Xth Corps remained in readiness at Montoire. At St. Amand the enemy did indeed deliver an attack, but it was only a feint to screen the westward retreat of strong columns. The Xth Corps was now able to concentrate and continue its march. It was in a peculiar position, being as near to Le Mans as the enemy himself and therefore more exposed at its left flank than in front.

On the 8th of January all the Corps were ordered to continue their movements. The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg gained La Ferté-Bernard, the IIIrd Corps the space intervening between St. Calais and Bouloire; behind it was the IXth Corps. The Xth Corps intended to reach La Chartre-sur-le-Loir on the 8th of January. On the way it had to pass through a series of defiles, and was, moreover, stopped by frequent obstacles on the roads; not till after dusk did they arrive at their place of destination, being all along in close touch with the enemy.

Prince Frederick Charles' orders for the 9th of January were: The XIIIth Corps was to reach St. Mars-la-Bruyère at the confluence of the brook Narais with the Huisne; the IIIrd Corps with its Head-Quarters was to reach Ardenay, the IXth behind it Bouloire, the Xth Parigné-l'Evêque; the Corps at the wings were to destroy the railroads leading to Alençon and Tours. Thus it was proposed on the 9th of January to concentrate the Second Army at the brook Narais, which crosses all the three roads of approach and forms a kind of position from which further attacks could be delivered. It was presumable that, according to the practice which so far had proved advantageous, the heads



of the columns on the march would everywhere cross the brook Narais and advance sufficiently far to enable the Army to deploy on the far side of it without difficulty. Only the centre of the Army was able, though with serious engagements, to perform its task, the right and left wings remained far to the rear. Thus the Second Army assumed the form of a wedge, its extremity the IIIrd Corps being driven far forward into the midst of the enemy. On the road La Ferté-Bernard—Connerré, which forms an all but uninterrupted defile and was covered with slippery ice, the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg had to conquer almost every step with the bayonet; not till late in the evening did he come into possession of the very strong position of Connerré, which was still nearly 10 miles distant from his place of destination. The Xth Corps too was unable to perform the task assigned to it. It had passed the night at La Chartre-sur-le-Loir, was seriously threatened on its left flank, nay, even in its rear, from the direction of Château-Renault and could only continue its march when the dangers were cleared out of the way. More than 15,000 men and 18 guns had endeavoured from the said spot to secure a passage across the Loir at Château-du-Loir, a line of march which would have led an enterprising enemy straight to the rear of the Xth Corps. In two columns the Corps now left the Loir, so as to reach on that day at least Grand-Lucé. There was a heavy snowfall, mists enveloped the mountains, and in the narrow defiles every horse that fell down arrested the march of the whole column. In front and at the left flank bloody fighting was going on, and in the evening, when darkness had fully set in, four battalions of the 79th and the Brunswickers delivered an assault upon the enemy, and by this home-thrust secured for the Xth Corps the line Vancè—Brives, being still more than a day's march from Parigné, their appointed place of destination.

On the 9th of January the IIIrd Corps still marched as hitherto in two columns. It seemed necessary to seek connection with the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg; accordingly a flank-detachment was formed at the right under Colonel Count Lynar (the first Battalion of the 24th, two Squadrons of Cuirassiers and 4 guns); this was ordered to seek the said connection on the road Connerré—Le Mans. The IIIrd Corps too was incessantly engaged from the morning till late in the evening, when the place prescribed for the Head-Quarters, Ardenay-Château, was taken by storm. As it was doubtful whether the greater part of the Corps would be able on the 9th to arrive at that point, General von Avensleben said: "A General in command must be very obedient; may the Head-Quarters for once be in the outpost-line?" Even from the little town of Bouloire the enemy had to be expelled by storm, and the position Surfond—Le Breil was taken with the bayonet. At Ardenay, the goal assigned to the Corps, the 6th Division encountered serious resistance. Paris' Division of the XVIIth Corps which had been pushed forward to that place to secure the great highway, had fitted up for defence and strongly occupied both the village and the castle of Ardenay, and the lines of approach were commanded by artillery and mitrailleuses. The 64th Regiment deployed right athwart the road; with difficulty the gunners placed two guns in position to aim at the enemy's artillery. South of the road, outflanking the French right wing, two battalions of the 35th Regiment hurry up. At 4 o'clock in the afternoon castle Ardenay is taken with the bayonet. Once more, when darkness was already setting in, the French tried to deliver a general assault upon the chaussée and to the south of it. And now an event took place, which can never be forgotten.

Without word of command, without firing a shot the whole line of fall with levelled bayonets and loud hurrahs upon the enemy; disregard fire, the villages Ardenay and La Butte are captured, and the French numerous prisoners, flee to the valley of the brook Narais. During outposts of the 6th Division stand on the heights east of this brook.

The flank detachment on the right met enemies everywhere, but the Corps. Colonel Count Lynar took possession of the cross roads by being situated on the road of approach of that Corps; it was at the rear of the Corps was fighting against the Grand Duke, between it and the main Army. Whosoever is hastening either to the place of combat or away from it, is met by a small detachment, which regards La Belle-Inutile as a fortress entrance. No one is ready to defend it to the last man; they pass the night under arms. The place was attacked from every quarter under heaven. From east, north and south the French who were retreating before the XIIIth Corps; from the side of the 4th Division, which General Chanzy had sent in support. The effect was that when he found a place in his rear occupied by the Germans and their friends supporting him, but a very powerful enemy instead, was simply a trap. Thus the contest at La Belle-Inutile became of prime importance for the Corps as well as for the French Army at Le Mans.

The 5th Division also reached the brook Narais on the evening of 9th January without having had to fight; it reported that a division of the houses of Parigné; connection with the Xth Corps was not established.

Thus on the 9th of January the IIIrd and IXth Corps of the Second Army arrived within nine English miles of Le Mans. The divisions of the French were twice as far off, and it was doubtful whether the right wing of the enemy would be able to effect a junction with the main Army at all. Prince Charles endeavoured to draw advantage from this circumstance and advanced with his whole Army. This led to the three days' Battle of Le Mans.

THE BATTLE.

FIRST DAY.

A military student who visits the battle-field of Le Mans, with a compass and graduated rule in hand, intending to study according to book the positions of the troops in the open field, will probably shake his head in perplexity; if he looks for powerful positions for artillery, or for infantry delivering assaults, or for the appearance of squadrons of cavalry forcing on the enemy a bloody onslaught, he will be doomed to disappointment; but he who surveys the heights that were held and defended by 150,000 French soldiers, scaled by about 50,000 Germans, will shut his text-books and put away his rule, for he stands face to face with forces which baffle all theory, and which head before the German soldier, who, by intelligent education, by method, by his physical strength and by unwearied instruction in military service, is enabled to fully and freely to expand his moral and physical capacities. When on successive days of battle, that the IIIrd and the IXth Corps are all before the enemy, whilst the corps on the wings are yet far to the rear, one is tempted

the attack was not delayed till the arrival of the Xth Corps on the left and of the XIIIth on the right, in order then, with united forces in a grand charge, to secure a brilliant victory. The situations created by war are ever shifting, and a gifted commander is he who knows how to invent new means for a new state of affairs. Prince Frederick Charles took into consideration that five to six Divisions of the enemy had by fierce and disastrous contests been more and more forced back upon Le Mans, and that therefore a considerable part of the enemy's forces were more or less shaken and disorganized; he accordingly determined by successive bold assaults to intensify the enemy's troubles. Had the IIIrd and the IXth Corps halted two days, say at the brook of Narais, then this delay would in equal measure have strengthened the ranks



MAJOR BRONSART V. SCHELLENDORF.
(Chief of the General Staff of the IXth Corps.)

of the enemy and weakened our own. On all the battlefields of the Franco-German War the Germans had doubled their numbers by their valour, and there was no reason why this procedure should be departed from at Le Mans. Thus we witness on the German side a tenacious retention of the points gained and unhesitating attack wherever possible; every step gives evidence of methodic guidance and of unshaken reliance on their own strength. The French, on the other hand, convincingly prove that young men hastily assembled and armed cannot be usefully employed on the battle-field. Ever fresh troops are led forward to renewed assaults, but they stream back defeated and useless for further fighting. General Chanzy did not take into consideration that these defeated troops acted as a wide-spread epidemic, which infects directly

and scatters fear and terror. In the morning, strong artillery positions which are reinforced hour by hour; at noon, powerful, bold lines of skirmishers who direct an effective fire upon the enemy, and lastly, in the evening a mighty assault *en masse*—this is the way to conquer; or, if you fail, the contest can be renewed on the morrow, the morale of the troops being still unimpaired.

The concluding sentence in Prince Frederick Charles' order for the day for the 10th of January is characteristic of the conduct of the battle on all the three days: "The point to be kept in view in all attacks is: the quicker and the more decisively the several columns make headway upon Le Mans, the greater the embarrassments of the isolated units of the enemy, who are scattered along our lines of march." Thus all the three columns of Prince Frederick Charles' Army, in their separate combats, adopted the common cry of battle: "Forward, unhesitatingly forward!"

On the 10th of January, the first day of the battle, the main burden fell to the lot of the IIIrd Corps, which, as at Vionville, deployed on a broad front, had to encounter far superior forces of the enemy. An immediate support by the corps on the flanks could not be reckoned upon; the XIIIth Corps had only just arrived in the neighbourhood of Connerré, and the Xth in that of Grand-Lucé. Only the IXth Corps, following close upon the IIIrd, was able to render assistance.

General von Alvensleben aimed on the 10th of January at gaining possession of Changé, a junction of roads about 5 miles from Le Mans; this meant a blow into the very heart of the enemy. Having regard both to the peculiarities of the ground, which did not allow of advancing on an extensive front, and to the shortness of the day, which did not admit of long columns coming up, the General divided his Corps into four columns. To the right of the great highway to Le Mans Colonel von Bismarck was to advance with the 12th Brigade (24th and 64th Regiments), the Brandenburg Regiment of Cuirassiers, 3 Batteries and one Company of Pioneers; at his left Colonel von Flatow was to press forward by way of Rossay upon Les Brosses, with the 11th Brigade (20th and 35th Regiments), one troop of Cuirassiers and one Battery. Colonel von Conta commanded the 9th Brigade (Body-Guards 48th Regiment and 3rd Jägers), the 3rd Regiment of Uhlans, 2 Batteries and one Company of Pioneers; he was ordered to march by Les Chasseries on the road leading due west until he had crossed the brook Narais at Gué-de-l'Aune. On the extreme left wing General von Schwerin was to advance upon Parigné-l'Evêque, with the 10th Brigade (12th and 52nd Regiments), one squadron of the 3rd Uhlans and two Batteries, to facilitate the approach of the Xth Corps. General von Alvensleben intended afterwards to direct the three columns of the left wing upon Changé.

The day was foggy, cold and wet, and the roads were covered with slippery ice. When at 8 o'clock in the morning General von Alvensleben interviewed the commanding officers of the IIIrd Corps, reports of artillery and small arms were heard from the direction of Parigné. This town, placed on an elevated position and consisting of buildings of massive structure, the Uhlans had at first found unoccupied, then afterwards they found it held by a strong force. Shortly before day-break Deplanque's Division had been moved in, and had been reinforced by part of Jouffroy's Division which was falling back before the Xth Corps. The enemy flings himself upon the left of the outposts of the 5th Division. General von Stülpnagel, anxious to economise his forces for the work awaiting him at Changé, determined to fight on the defensive with his 9th Brigade and to deal the decisive blow with the 10th. The contest round Parigné is equally glorious both for the commander and for the troops. The 12th and 52nd Regiments press forward over the snow-covered plain, with the far-sounding battle-cry, "Hurrah! Brandenburg"; the town, although well defended, is taken by the 5th Division, and with it 2 mitrailleuses, 1 gun, 2 standards and 2500 prisoners. The defeated had to choose between capture or death. Once more a whole division of the enemy is broken into fragments. General Stülpnagel occupies Parigné and forthwith continues his march. The just delight at this great success does not for a moment interrupt the soldierly obedience which leads them straight to Changé.

Colonel von Flatow, who stood to the right of the Division, encountered serious resistance at 3 o'clock in the afternoon at Gué-de-la-Hart. The skirmishing lines of five battalions of the enemy hurled themselves from the neighbourhood of Les

Gars upon the 2nd battalion of the 35th Regiment; 9 officers and more than 100 rank and file fell dead or wounded, yet the battalion did not budge. General von Alvensleben ordered from the right the 1st battalion of the 35th, and from the left the 1st battalion of the 20th Regiment to fall upon the flanks of the French. Darkness had gradually set in; on the white snow the bodies of our skirmishers appeared as dark spots. The enemy was wholly invisible, only the flashes of his firing blazed up and at times presented the appearance of a sea of fire. At half-past 4 the bugle resounded in shrill tones from the right: "The whole line advance!" The call is taken up on all sides and at a bound every rifle-man is up, and with hurrahs and beat of drum the whole line rushes upon the enemy. Gué-de-la-Hart and the line of the brook are taken, and 1000 prisoners besides; connection with the 5th Division is gained. At first Gué-de-la-Hart was mistaken for Changé; when the error was perceived General von Alvensleben, undeterred by the darkness that had set in, commanded the execution of his own order, the capture of Changé. As at Parigné, so also here success is secured by an outflanking attack. The 2nd battalion of the 20th Regiment delivers a frontal attack, whilst Colonel von Wulffen falls upon the flank with 5 companies of the 52nd Regiment closed up to short distances. The French, who had already gone into quarters, hasten to their places of assembly, and an embittered fight ensues from street to street and house to house. Suddenly our hurrahs are heard from the rear: Major von Natzmer had marched round the town with the fusiliers of the 52nd Regiment, and bursts into the place from the Le Mans road. His fire falls upon the rear of the French assembled on the market-place; they endeavour to escape in disorderly flight, but leave 800 prisoners in our hands. This very 52nd Regiment had lost in the battle of Vionville 50 officers and 1202 rank and file; there is no gainsaying it, the Prussian soldier is firm as a rock; after six months this regiment is still unchanged: "Always ready!"

The shortest march was that of the 12th Brigade, which was accompanied by Lieutenant-General von Buddenbrock, it reached the main road to Le Mans at about 11 o'clock in the morning. The points of its columns announced that Champagne and the plateau d'Anvours were held by strong forces of the enemy. Three companies of the 24th Regiment advance against the village, with drums beating, and drive the defenders partly across the Huisne, and partly back on to the plateau d'Anvours; five other companies of the regiment attack on both sides of the road, and two guns, brought into position with difficulty, silence the artillery of the enemy, who with heavy loss withdraws from the railway line.

Along the whole front the IIIrd Corps had driven back the French towards Le Mans; its outposts occupying a line fully 5 miles in extent, stood close to the enemy, but were not in touch with the neighbouring corps either on the right or on the left. On the 10th of January it lost 33 officers and 440 rank and file; it made 5000 prisoners and captured 2 standards, one gun and 2 mitrailleuses. Conscientiously it had done its duty.

The XIIIth Corps, was ordered, on the 10th of January, to continue its advance upon Le Mans. The two Divisions of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg were opposed by 69 Battalions, 15 Batteries and 30 Squadrons of the enemy, in all about 60,000 men; Rousseau's Division was at Montfort and Pont-de-Gesnes, at its left Collin's Division, and behind both, in reserve, Villeneuve's Division at Savigné-l'Évêque and Goujard's at Montfort. The French had established themselves on the gently ascending

ground, which was covered with quickset hedges, copses and farmhouses. The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg thought it best to lead the main body of his corps to the right bank of the Huisne, so as to be able there to press heavily on the left flank of the enemy. At first he had led across the river near Sceaux the 22nd Division (General von Wittich) and directed it to march upon Lombron. The Mecklenburg-Hanseatic Division (Lieutenant-General von Treskow) advanced on the left bank of the river and arrived at La Belle-Inutile. Pont-de-Gesnes and the country behind it are discovered to be strongly occupied; both Divisions have to surmount unusual difficulties. A gentle thaw has set in, converting all the roads into slides. The inhabitants are requisitioned to strew ashes, sand and straw to make advance possible in the narrow roads, which are alternately ascending and descending. To attack the strong position Pont-de-Gesnes—Montfort with the available troops seemed very hazardous, and there was no time to bring more troops across to the right bank in order to deliver the attack from there. Accordingly the undertaking was postponed to the following day.

On the right flank of the XIIIth Corps, Colonel von Beckedorff with a flank detachment had come up to the road from Bonnetable, driving the enemy before him; still further to the right the 4th Cavalry Division, having all along to overcome the resistance of *Francs-tireurs* and of the inhabitants, only got as far as Bonnetable. The Grand Duke intended on the day following to wage a procrastinating battle in front of Pont-de-Gesnes and to press forward towards Le Mans, with both Divisions, on the right bank of the Huisne.

The Xth Corps was set in motion on the 10th of January in two columns from Vancé and Brives. Although it did not encounter any enemy, yet it only arrived at Grand-Lucé at 2 o'clock in the night, having been delayed by bad and slippery roads.

Two exploits, performed in the evening of the 10th of January, exercised great influence on the course of events. Captain Neumeister, of the Corps of Engineers, went forward with a few pioneers and *jägers* a distance of more than 15 miles, right into the midst of the enemy and destroyed the railway to Le Mans, which the enemy was about to use for bringing up two divisions; and the commander of the cavalry of the Xth Corps, General von Schmidt, rode, unaccompanied, right through the midst of the French, to see with his own eyes what was going on there behind the horizon. He presents himself before General von Alvensleben, who was fighting at Changé, and pledges himself that the friend of Vionville and Beaune-la-Rolande would be on the 11th by the side of the IIIrd Corps. Through the snow-clad bivouacs of the Brandenburgers the story passed from mouth to mouth, that General von Schmidt had galloped through the French merely to announce the coming of the Hanoverians.

To arrive at a just comprehension of the contests round Le Mans it must *not* be overlooked that the IIIrd Corps had since the 6th of January, been daily promised in the army orders, that it would be joined by the XIIIth and the Xth Corps, and that this junction was not effected before the 11th of January, and yet this essential change in the situation did not for a moment disarrange the plans of General von Alvensleben.

SECOND DAY.

The position held by the French at Le Mans might be compared to a great bastioned front, except that nature offered advantages which the art of fortification cannot equal; a long storm-proof curtain and two mighty bastions projecting. The

curtain was on the right bank of the Huisne from Parance as far as Le Mans, and was formed by the high bank of the river; a line of rail and the highway run along the base of the slope and afford positions of advantage for infantry and artillery; the slope of the valley ascends in terraces for the culture of the vine and is suitable for bringing into action several tiers of artillery one above the other, and indeed the declivities of the valley often presented the appearance of a volcano in full activity. On this occasion it was that the Gatling guns, "barking dogs" as the men called them, made their first appearance; they are a kind of revolver-gun firing conical leaden projectiles about a lb. in weight. The Huisne, though frozen, nevertheless could be crossed by bridges only. The right bastion, projecting across the river, juts out towards the road by which the Xth Corps was approaching and fully commands it, the attack, moreover, has to be delivered without any cover almost as up a glacis. The French front held a road, called "The Oxen-path,"¹ which extends from Arnage on the Sarthe as far as the causeway Vendôme Le Mans and encircles the extensive woodlands, which occur between it and Le Mans. The left bastion, also projecting beyond the Huisne, was formed by a peculiarly shaped feature of the ground, called the Plateau d'Anvours: a rock steeply placed on the plain, with far-reaching plateau.

Both flanks of the enemy were covered, the right by the Sarthe, the left by a ridge of heights, which is a continuation of the Plateau d'Anvours on the other side of the river in a northerly direction, and reaches from the Huisne till it falls again to the Sarthe. The whole position, more than 12 miles in extent, was strengthened by field-works, shelter-trenches, and entrenched gun-emplacements. The right bastion along the Oxen-path from Arnage as far as the neighbourhood of Changé was held by six divisions in the first line, and behind them there were two divisions in reserve on the road Le Mans—Mulsanne. The left wing of the enemy (the steep bank of the Huisne, the Plateau d'Anvours and the heights joining it to the north) was held by four divisions and one in reserve; this latter was also charged with preventing the advance of our 4th Division of Cavalry on this flank.

This exposition explains the objective in the contest of the 11th of January. The IIIrd Corps had to stand firm; it formed the key-stone which by its fall involves the whole edifice in ruin. The two projecting bastions must be taken; the right by the Xth Corps, and the Plateau d'Anvours by the 18th Division of the IXth Corps, and finally the XIIth Corps had to push forward its attack at all costs on the right bank of the river so as to threaten the rear of the enemy.

General Chanzy was determined to resist to the utmost. He assumed that the Germans were much exhausted by the marches and contests of the last few days, and calculated that in the enclosed country they would be unable to make their superiority in cavalry and artillery felt. The right wing was to recapture Parigné and the centre to press forward to Ardenay. Instead of utilizing the defensive position which offered all conceivable advantages and was pressed upon him by the inferior training of his troops, he again had recourse to isolated attacks, which had never yet proved successful.

General Chanzy assumed that the battle of the 11th of January would prove decisive, and a comparison of the orders for this day on both sides is characteristic of the morale of the two Armies. On the German side simple orders without any

¹ Chemin aux Boeufs. [*Trs.*]

exhortation whatever, for it would be regarded as a mere insult, if the importance of the battle and the expectation of valour were pointed out. General Chanzy, on the other hand, speaks in indignant terms of the disobedience of several generals; behind every Army Corps cavalry was to be posted to drive fugitives back into the fight; he threatens to cashier every general or other officer, who does not obey orders, and promises rewards to those who would distinguish themselves.

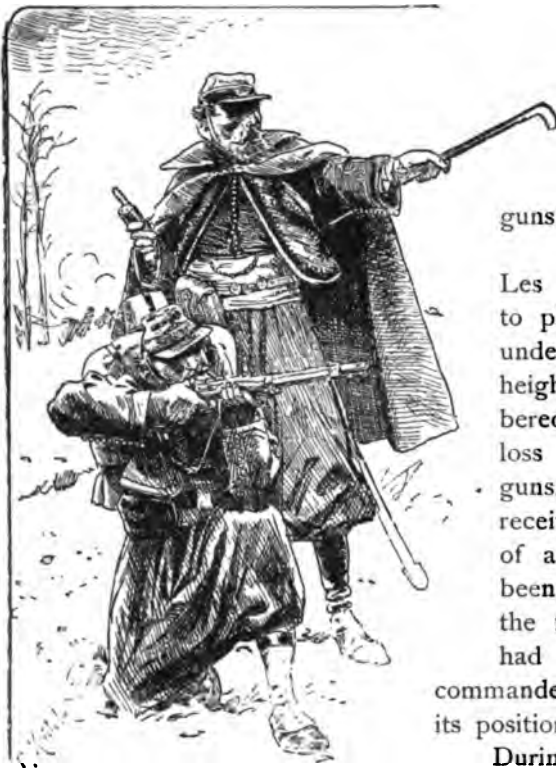
On the 11th of January Prince Frederick Charles ordered the resumption of the attack. The IXth Corps was pushed forward on the road Vendôme—Le Mans as far as St. Hubert; as for the IIIrd Corps it suffices to quote the concluding sentence of a letter of the Prince's: "that the IIIrd Corps advances as early as possible for the decisive attack upon Le Mans, spending, if need be, their last breath and strength."

On the morning of the 11th of January this Corps occupied a front of nearly 8000 paces, with an available force of only 12,000 men, giving 3 men for every 2 paces of front, while theory demands 6 to 9 men per pace for the delivery of an attack. General von Alvensleben well understood the position in which he was placed. He knew he could rely on his Brandenburg regiments, but he also knew the limits set to human performance. In face of overwhelming superiority of numbers, without any possibility of utilizing artillery, the soldiers best friend, and aware that the coöperation of the Xth Corps could not be expected before the afternoon was far advanced, he was convinced that the strength of his feeble IIIrd Corps did not suffice to maintain an offensive engagement lasting the whole day. He therefore with the approval of Prince Frederick Charles, postponed commencing operations till 11 o'clock.

The 12th Brigade had two battalions holding Champagné and its bridge, and one battalion the junction of the roads at La Lune-d'Anvours, facing the bravest troops of the French, the Papal Zouaves. They were French gentlemen who had hurried home from the Pope's service to be useful to their country. With the three remaining battalions of his brigade Colonel von Bismarck moved upon Les Arches-Château, so as to approach the corps from the right. This château occupies a high situation on the left slope of the valley of the Huisne; after the battle it was a heap of ruins.

The attack of the IIIrd Corps was opened by the 11th Brigade, the 9th and the 10th at first remaining at Changé. The enemy had strongly occupied the eastern edge of the wood between Changé and Le Mans, earthworks having during the night been thrown up in several places, notably at the farm Le Tertre, a closed redoubt on a knoll, which was destined to become the focus of the contest. From the right bank of the river it was possible to sweep the edge of the wood and the line of approach. The 11th Brigade was soon threatened in flank and rear, as columns of the enemy press over the bridge from Noyers-Château. Attacked on all sides, the 20th Regiment was overwhelmed; the 2nd battalion loses all its officers; now Colonel von Flatow leads all the men he has into the firing line, the 20th and 35th Regiments stand in a long dense line of skirmishers by an open space in the wood; every half-hour new furious assaults are made by the enemy, but the brigade holds out till the evening. This contest does great honour to the 11th Brigade; it only numbered 2900 men and did battle against successive divisions.

At about one o'clock the 10th Brigade was set in motion towards the wood; the 52nd Regiment is only able to advance step by step. The heights of Le Tertre are to be the token of victory in this embittered contest, and for their possession the 12th



PAPAL ZOUAVES.

and 52nd Regiments do battle against the resolute foe. Deeds of individual heroism are performed; the fallen Prussian is seen to lie by the side of the slain Frenchman. At last the body-guards make head-way; Le Tertre falls and two

guns are captured.

At 2 o'clock the 12th Brigade occupies Les Arches-Château. The attempt is made to place 10 guns in position close by, but under the murderous fire from the opposite heights; the guns cannot be so much as unlimbered, and only with difficulty and with heavy loss are the gunners able to withdraw the guns. On this occasion Lieutenant Haas received 32 wounds from a single discharge of a mitrailleuse; although he had already been severely wounded he refused to leave the fight, and as he could no longer ride he had himself tied on to a limber, and thus commanded his section. This brigade too maintains its position.

During the night the IIIrd Corps was in close touch with the enemy; on the left connection had been secured with the Xth. Left to his own, unaided resources, General von Alvensleben had

pushed forward into the very midst of an enemy greatly superior in numbers. This new effort cost a sacrifice of 34 officers and more than 500 rank and file.

Simultaneously with the contests of the IIIrd Corps the 18th Division gained possession of the Plateau d'Anvours. The 11th Regiment, the 2nd battalion of the 85th and the 9th Jägers storm the eastern half and capture the enemy's artillery; Colonel von Falckenhausen storms the western half with the 85th Regiment; here also the French are unable to save their guns. Towards 5 o'clock the French deliver a mighty counter-attack. Powerful masses come up the road from the direction of Yvré—it is the Division of the Bretons with the Papal Zouaves. After half-an-hour's combat the assaulting force is broken and the Plateau d'Anvours remains finally in the possession of the IXth Corps.

On the morning of the 11th the 17th Division of the XIIIth Corps was at Connerre on the left bank of the Huisne; on the right bank there were five battalions of Rauch's Detachment. They waited for the 22nd Division to get up to the front. In front of Cohernières as far as Le Chêne the enemy stood in dense skirmishing lines, at a distance of barely 2—300 paces from our skirmishers. At 11 o'clock the attack begins and the enemy is defeated all along the line; he falls back upon a second position, which has been prepared for defence and extends in a straight line from Lombron to the Huisne. Darkness prevents the renewal of the assault. The XIIIth Corps has driven the enemy back a distance of more than 3 miles; it halts in front of Lombron and Pont-de-Gesnes, ready to resume the attack on the following day.

The Xth Corps had received orders in the night, 10th—11th, to post itself on the road Mulsanne—Vendôme, and by means of the 14th Cavalry Brigade to establish communication with the IIIrd Corps on the Parigné-road. Ever since the 6th of January General von Voigts-Rhetz had without intermission been labouring under the disadvantage that divisions of the enemy, like him, pushing forward to Le Mans, were threatening his left flank. On the 11th also the flank was imperilled and Ecommoy was still occupied; this had to be conquered before the advance upon Mulsanne, where the enemy was expected, could be begun. The 20th Division (General von Kraatz) was moving along the highway, escorted on the right by a flank guard, the 10th Jägers and the 1st battalion of the Brunswickers. At Mulsanne a few French companies are encountered, but they offer no resistance. Shortly after 12 o'clock artillery thunder, ever increasing in volume, is heard from the north, and orders arrive from Prince Frederick Charles that the Xth Corps is to hasten straight to the battle-field. General von Voigts-Rhetz, without a moment's hesitation, falls in full force upon the enemy facing him, in order to cut his way through to Le Mans, being convinced that this was the only possible way to support the IIIrd Corps.

The ground stretches up to the heights of Les Mortes-Aures, bare of cover like the glacis of a fortress. A battery placed across the road, commands the line of approach; several lines of skirmishers placed in shelter-trenches in tiers, keep the ground in front under fire. In the darkness it is often impossible to distinguish friend from foe, but in spite of all, the 17th Regiment and the Brunswick Fusiliers take the heights by storm, and the 1st battalion of the 53rd Regiment terminates the contest with a bayonet-charge. Hearing our hurrah, the French flee in wild haste. It was now 8 o'clock; the defenders make one more attempt to overpower us, but they only burst out in a wild musketry fire, whilst their officers are unable to urge them further; soon they all stream back, and many hundreds of prisoners are driven together, offering no resistance.

Once more a hot musketry fire is heard on the right. Major von Przychowski, who was there covering the advance, ascertained that the heights of Les Epinettes in front of him were occupied by a strong force, consisting of riflemen and artillery behind earthworks. He resolved therefore to surprise the enemy under cover of night. Not a sound is uttered by jäger or skirmisher; thus at 2 o'clock at night the long line advances; once at the top they raise a loud hurrah, and the victory is won. These assaults of the Xth Corps, delivered in complete darkness upon an unusually strong position of the enemy, have become instructive for future wars. Troops thoroughly well trained and experienced in war may in the darkness find the cover which daylight refuses; but only such troops can do so.

The arrival of the Xth corps and the capture of the strong right bastion made it clear that the next day would bring the final decision. With the right bastion in the hands of the Xth and IIIrd Corps, the left bastion in those of the IXth and the curtain hard pressed by the IIIrd Corps, the fortress must soon fall.

THIRD DAY.

The problem to be solved on the third day of battle by the Army of Prince Fredrick Charles was the necessary corollary of the events of the preceding day. To prove himself conqueror the Prince's Head-Quarters must be transferred to Le Mans,

the wealthy capital of the province, the dépôt of the stores of the French Army, the junction of four lines of railway and of numerous roads.

The presence of the German soldier in Le Mans must give unequivocal proof to the French that their battle was lost, for in that case the remnant of their forces not yet *hors de combat* would have only one narrow road of retreat left them, and that was gravely threatened by the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg. In the night previous to the 12th of January the Xth and the IIIrd Corps were encamped within 2 to 2½ miles from the bridge at Pontlieue, which is the means of communication with Le Mans. The heads of both the corps reached beyond the "Oxen-path", which had traced the front of the enemy on the 11th. Le Tertre at their right was in the hands of the 5th Division; the heights of Les Tuileries at their left in those of the Xth Corps, and the assault upon Le Mans was to be delivered by both forces. The 6th Division had established itself fronting the enemy on the left high bank of the Huisne from Les Arches-Château past Noyers-Château as far as L'Epau and this position it was to maintain; the IXth Corps was in possession of the Plateau d'Anvours as far as the farm-houses encircling the northern base; this corps too was ordered to maintain its position on the 12th and to operate across the Huisne in support of the XIIIth Corps; this latter corps was ordered to spend its last breath in pushing forward to Le Mans on the right bank of the river. To summarize: Stand firm in the centre and act on the offensive at the two wings.

The IIIrd, Xth and XIIIth Corps were greatly exhausted; no fresh battalions anywhere and the ranks of the officers thinned; nevertheless the orders were: Forward, forward amidst bloody struggles!—Had it only been possible to read in the heart of the grenadier, who, rifle in hand, was gazing on the night of the 11th of January, motionless, towards Le Mans! Ever since the 6th of January this grenadier has been on the march and fighting from early in the morning till late at night; for days he has tasted neither meat nor warm food; he has lived on the victuals taken from the knapsacks of the French dead. His shoes are all to pieces, a wrappage of straw is tied on with string; here in the depth of winter his legs are encased in mere twill drawers. His comrades to the right of him and to the left lie stiff and stark on the field; his captain, his lieutenant—he buried them yesterday. The soldier's work hardens the heart, but the emotions are all the more permanent. The grenadier is neither exasperated nor intimidated; the battle is not yet ended, the enemy stands but a hundred paces in front of him and there is no talk of repose to-day. Even in this icy-cold night the German soldier never loses sight of his duty for one moment.

General Chanzy ordered the recapture of the position of Les Tuileries, and the unconditional retention of Yvré and Sargé opposite the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg.

As early as 6 o'clock in the morning French companies press forward with powder-bags, intending to blow up the bridge of Noyers-Château; they are driven back, but the firing called the IIIrd Corps to arms. The 6th Division stands within rifle-range of the fortress-like main position of the enemy, separated from him by the Huisne; the 5th Division stand in front of Changé round Le Tertre. Here also the French make attack soon after 8 o'clock, and once more Le Tertre becomes the focus of the fight. With butt-end and bayonet the 10th Brigade defends itself against the aggressor, who at last gives way; the 52nd clings to his skirts along the road to Pontlieu. As on the 16th of August, connection with the Xth Corps is gained during the engagement.

General von Voigts-Rhetz moved with his corps upon Le Mans simultaneously by three roads. To cover his rear he had to leave a detachment at Mulsanne. On his right, on the Parigné-road, General von Schmidt was marching; in the centre, on the Ruaudin road, General von Woyna; to the left, on the Mulsanne road, General von Kraatz. The Corps Artillery followed in rear of the right column. The battle was begun about 9 o'clock with the central column of General von Woyna. The enemy awaited them at Les Fermes, in a position prepared for defence; Jägers and Brunswickers deliver the assault; the farms are taken and the French flee in disorder, leaving upwards of 1000 prisoners in our hands. All the artillery of the Xth Corps that can find room now comes up on all three roads and fires upon Le Mans. Owing to the fog, aim is taken by the indications of the map. General von Kraatz, in well closed-up columns, cuts his way through with the bayonet to Pontlieue, and takes the place. On the other side of the Huisne, behind barricades and walls, the French still offer resistance.

The IXth Corps was ordered on the 12th of January to gain possession of the farmhouses encircling the foot of the Plateau d'Anvours, and to support the XIIIth Corps. At daybreak Wrangel's Division at once goes to work and drives the French across the Huisne. Our batteries make their appearance and cannonade the opposite bank; even from the first their shells are not returned. Everywhere masses of troops are seen in precipitate retreat; Yvré alone, where the road from Vendôme to Le Mans crosses the river, is obstinately defended by the French.

On the 11th of January the XIIIth Corps had made but little progress; in order to be in time to coöperate in the decisive action impending at Le Mans, it was indispensable energetically to push forward beyond Savigné. The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg therefore intended to move with the 17th Division by way of Lombron to St. Corneille; the 22nd was to get on to the road leading from Bonnetable to Le Mans, and press upon Savigné, and finally the 4th Division of Cavalry, coming along the road from Ballon, was to threaten the rear of the enemy.

At about 7 o'clock the 17th Division set out; it found that the enemy had evacuated Montfort and Lombron; from all the farmhouses troops of prisoners are collected, all in most pitiable condition; the roads are covered with arms and knapsacks which have been thrown away. At St. Corneille, behind the brook Merdereau, the enemy took up a new position in a line previously entrenched. The 17th Division makes an attack at half-past three; the battalions of the 76th Regiment enter St. Corneille from two sides, capture the château and upwards of 500 prisoners. Without a check the 17th Division pursues across the Parance brook, and when it is quite dark its heads are pushed forward beyond the road Savigné—Le Mans.

At 1.30 p.m. the 22nd Division had reached the road Bonnetable—Le Mans at Chanteloup; it encountered the enemy at St. Croies. By an outflanking attack the battalions of the 94th and 95th Regiments take the place which was strongly entrenched, yet after dark the French attempt a counter-attack; without firing a shot our brave battalions assail them, and they flee in utter disorder to Savigné, leaving upwards of 3000 prisoners in our hands. The XIIIth Corps passed the night at the places it had reached; strenuously fighting, they had advanced on the 12th of January a distance of $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

Meanwhile the battle had been decided on the other wing, the left.

The Xth Corps and the 5th Division irresistibly pushed on to Le Mans. The resistance at the passage of the river is speedily overcome, but when the first Prussian troops set foot on the bridge a small clear blue cloud curls upwards, followed immediately by a report; the intention was to blow up the bridge, but the attempt failed. From the railway station is heard the noise of departing trains; the 1st battalion of the Brunswickers hastens there, and the 17th Regiment forces an entry into the main street; the street-fight is continued till late at night; several houses have to be taken by storm, and a coffee-house to be regularly demolished by artillery. Wild disorder prevails everywhere; here there are long rows of transport vehicles abandoned by the drivers; often one horse stands harnessed to a dead companion; all round are carcasses of men and horses, and guns and mitrailleuses that have been left behind. All the bonds of discipline are dissolved; peasants report that groups of 10 to 15 officers, revolver in hand, forcibly seized vehicles to escape more readily. An English colonel, who had been present with General Chanzy's staff as spectator, and had remained behind in Le Mans, related that, looking from the heights of Yvré over the heads of the dense masses of the assembled French Army, the appearance was presented of a lake agitated by a gentle breeze; but when the first shells struck into the mass, the waves rose higher and ever higher, till at last the whole volume streamed backward in a mad flight. Not so the conquerors; with loud exultations they greeted each other in the conquered town; they captured 20,000 prisoners, 17 guns, 2 standards and great quantities of war matériel, but in these severe contests they had lost 200 officers and 3200 rank and file, more than half of which loss fell to the Brandenburgers.

The defeated French Army retreated westward to Laval, behind the Mayenne, and northward to Alençon.

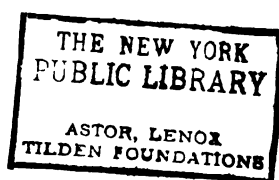
The troops retreating west were pursued by the Xth Corps, those to the north by the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, who did not enter Le Mans at all. Some hot skirmishes had yet to be fought in places, but on the evening of the 16th the Grand Duke was already able to enter Alençon, and a solemn thanksgiving service was celebrated there on the 18th. Eight days afterwards a great part of the XIIIth Corps occupied wealthy Rouen, offering to the men rest, comfort and the pleasures of a large city.

The battle of Le Mans utterly destroyed the mighty Army of the Loire, destined to relieve Paris. A few days later General von Werder, in the three days' battle on the Lisaine, defeated the second great Army of Relief, under General Bourbaki. Far from Paris was decided the fate of the Capital and the issue of the war.



ON THE RETREAT IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF LE MANS.
(By permission of the Photographic Society of Berlin.)

[face p. 464.



CHAPTER XII

STRASSBURG—BELFORT—PONTARLIER

By FRANZ OBERHOFFER

Lieutenant-General, Deputy Quartermaster-General in the Great General Staff, and Chief of the Ordnance Survey.

THE SIEGE OF STRASSBURG

INVESTMENT AND BOMBARDMENT, 11—28 AUGUST

AFTER the victory of Wörth the conquest of Strassburg had become a military necessity just as the re-acquisition of this ancient German city was politically imperative. If Alsace was to be restored to the mother-country it was indispensable that Strassburg should be in German hands before the conclusion of peace.

Before the war Strassburg was considered a fortress of first rank; it was the sally-port and the *point d'appui* of every French aggression upon South Germany. Its circumvallation on Vauban's system was somewhat complicated, with wet ditches; but it had no advanced outworks that could have protected the city from a bombardment. Of the country before the several fronts, that to the north and west admitted of an easier approach for an attack than that in the south, where inundations could be formed by artificial dams. The suburbs, extending as they did close up to the glacis, were disadvantageous to the defender, as they obstructed the view and diminished the effect produced from the walls; and, moreover, they enabled the attack to be made from close quarters. Such was the case in the north with Robertsau and Schiltigheim, and in the west with Kronenburg and Königshofen.

The French from over-great confidence had neglected to take any measures needful to enable this important frontier-fortress to resist a siege. It appears that the idea of an enemy in front of the gates of Strassburg had never occurred to the French. Opposite South Germany this security seemed justified, and yet it was to a large extent South-Germans who effected the conquest of the place. After the outbreak of the war General Uhrich, who, in spite of his 68 years, was a man of energy and circumspection, had been appointed commandant of the fortress, and he it was that had to conduct the defence, which in the given circumstances was beset with difficulties. His first measures found little support from the French War Office. His proposal to level promenades and buildings so as to form a clear space before the ramparts was only partially sanctioned. The question of the garrison had not been regulated, and when on the 6th of August the first reports of the defeat of Wörth spread amazement and terror in the city, the garrison consisted of only three battalions of the line and a few dépôts; the important Corps of Engineers was wholly absent. The complement

of men necessary for the defence was formed from the fugitives of MacMahon's army. The fact that this garrison was so ill-assorted explains how it was possible that the investing troops, feeble as they were at first, could nevertheless make an immediate close approach to the works and gain possession, almost without opposition, of all the points in the neighbouring country which were important for the attack.

Within five days after the battle of Wörth, viz., on the 11th of August, the Baden Division appeared before the fortress and quickly cut it off from all external communication. This Division consisted of only 12 battalions, 12 squadrons and 9 batteries. Reconnaissances made by General Schulz of the engineers, (a member of the Staff of the Third Army) and by Lieutenant-Colonel von Leszczynski soon shewed the importance of the north-west front of the fortress for the proposed attack, and



GENERAL V. WERDER.

that the possession of Schiltigheim, as well as of the space between the Ill and the Rhine for covering the flank, was of utmost moment. In the very first days therefore, the investing troops possessed themselves of the Robertsau, of the Rhine-Ill canal, of Kronenburg and of Königshofen, almost without opposition from the defenders.

On the 13th of August the King ordered the formation of a besieging force under the command of General von Werder. It was composed as follows:

The Baden Field Division, of which General von Laroche was now in command; the Landwehr Division of the Guards under General von Loën; the 1st Landwehr Division under General von Tresckow, which latter force, together with a brigade formed of the 30th and 34th Regiments, 2 Regiments of reserve cavalry and 3 reserve batteries, was designated the First Reserve Division.

Altogether these amounted to 46 battalions, 24 squadrons, and 18 field-batteries. To these were added: a park of siege-artillery of 200 rifled guns, 88 mortars, 30 companies of garrison-artillery, one engineer siege-train and 10 fortress-companies of pioneers.

But these reinforcements, as well as the staffs to be created for the service of the siege, could only arrive gradually, and the 23rd of August had been reached ere the formation of the corps could be regarded as at all complete.

Meanwhile the Baden Division endeavoured, jointly with the 30th and 34th Regiments which arrived first, to secure the advantages so far gained and to prepare the ground for future labours. On the 12th of August the Grand Duke of Baden, who had previously been informed of the task allotted to his field-division and had ordered his troops of the line, which were still at Rastatt, to be pushed forward, arrived before

Strassburg. He fixed his Head Quarters at Lampertheim for the whole time of the siege. On the 15th of August General von Werder, the Commander-in-Chief of the besieging army, arrived at Mundolsheim outside Strassburg; Lieutenant-Colonel von Leszczyński became his Chief of the Staff. Up to now the enemy restricted himself to clearing the ground and collecting supplies from the country in front of the fortress, as far as the investing troops allowed him. Not till the 16th did he attempt to make a sortie on a somewhat large scale southwards towards Illkirch. It was brilliantly repulsed and cost the French three guns. On the right bank of the Rhine, near Kehl, three batteries had been armed with heavy artillery from Rastatt during the night of the 18th of August. Owing to a misunderstanding they opened fire early on the 19th against the citadel, which thereupon laid in ashes the open city of Kehl.

At last, on the 18th of August, they were able to set about unloading the siege-park at the railway station of Vendenheim and fitting it up there. But, on the one hand, the desire to gain the end as soon as possible, and, on the other hand, the prospect of slow progress in the formal attack suggested another means of reducing the place, viz., a bombardment. The lack of discipline reported to prevail in Strassburg might be regarded as a favourable condition. Nevertheless opinions were divided about the wisdom of this measure and its probable success, but as Generals von Decker and Mertens, who were charged with guiding the attacks of the artillery and of the engineers and had now arrived, made no objection to the attempt, and the Great Head Quarters also consented, General von Werder finally determined on the bombardment.

Whilst the heavier guns at Kehl on the right bank of the Rhine, and the field batteries on the left bank of the river kept the fortress well engaged, the outposts on the evening of the 23rd approached nearer to the fortress and began to construct 13 bombardment-batteries, all on the north-western side of it. According to their position a part of them proved useful afterwards when the formal attack was made. In the rainy, dark night it was difficult to carry on the work, the dépôts were not yet fully organized and the work was new; nevertheless the attention of the enemy had not been roused. On the evening of the 24th the bombardment was opened from 78 siege-guns and 54 field-guns; soon the night was lit up by the gleam of fire from the city. On the day following only a few batteries continued the work. An attempt of the bishop to obtain a cessation of the bombardment failed, as the governor was not prepared



LIEUT.-COLONEL V. LESZCZYŃSKI.
(Chief of the General Staff of the XIVth Corps.)



SIEGE-BATTERY FÖHRENBACH (SOUTHERN BATTERY) BEFORE KEHL.
(After a contemporary photograph.)

to open negotiations. On the evening of the 25th the bombardment of the city was resumed with increased vigour, and continued till 2 o'clock in the morning. The effect was terrible: many of the public buildings, the city railway station, the new church and the valuable library became the prey of the flames, and the roof-beams of the cathedral caught fire. But General Urich steadfastly refused to surrender. It was evident that the bombardment would not secure the end in view. When in the evening the fire was resumed it was directed mainly against the works, and only the field-guns continued up till the 28th to hurl incendiary shells by night into the city from repeatedly shifted positions.



STREET IN KEHL.
(After a contemporary photograph.)



THE BURNING OF STRASSBURG.

THE FORMAL ATTACK AND THE CAPITULATION, AUG. 29TH—SEPT. 27TH.

The commencement of the formal attack was now energetically taken in hand; the principle of the plan of attack sketched out by Captain Wagner of the engineers against the sharp north-western corner of the fortress was accepted. The First Parallel was begun at once during the night before the 30th of August, whilst the siege-artillery added 11 more batteries to the 10 bombardment batteries which could still be used. On the 31st the parallel was formed, with sufficient cover, at a distance of about 650 yards from the ramparts, and at 7 o'clock in the morning the batteries of attack opened fire on the enemy, who was entirely taken by surprise. The parallel extended for a distance of nearly 3000 yards, from the Aar, an arm of the Ill, past Schiltigheim and behind the churchyard of St. Helena to Kronenburg and Königshofen. In the vigorous artillery contest that ensued the superiority of the German guns was soon established, and within a few days the number of batteries of attack on both banks of the Rhine was increased.

During the night of the 1st of September the throwing up of the Second Parallel was begun at a distance of about 250 yards from the covered way. On the left wing the 30th Regiment took possession of the island of Jars on the River Ill. The construction of this parallel was not carried on without interference, nor without considerable losses. Part of the work miscarried in consequence of a faulty alignment, and had to be altered. At daybreak the French made a sortie on a large scale; 14 companies of the garrison, supported by an energetic artillery fire from the fortress, advanced upon the whole front of attack, but the contest led to no permanent result. The Germans lost in killed and wounded 7 officers and 149 rank and file. A second sortie took place on the 3rd of September, and this also was repulsed at the second parallel.

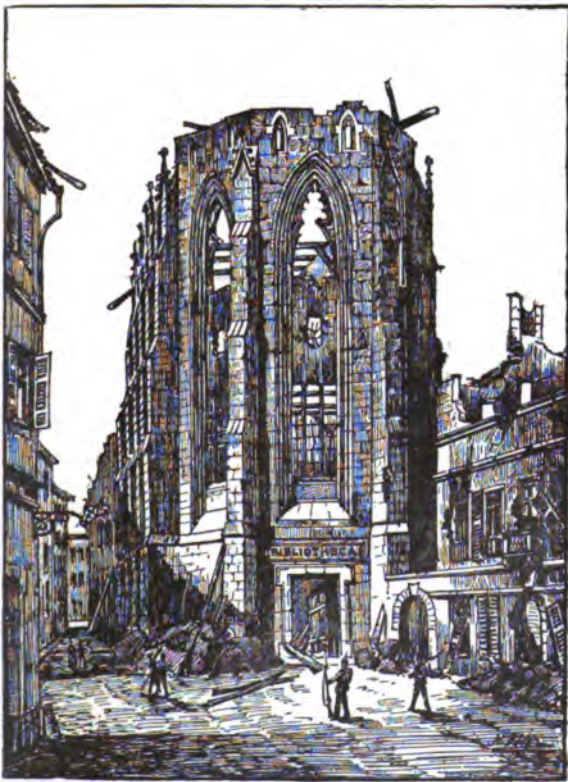
Up till now water had made its appearance in the trenches only at the low-lying left wing of the Second Parallel. Examination having shown that the ground to the north of the fortress could be sapped, General von Werder finally resolved to direct

increased the difficulties of the labour in the soaked clay soil; the trenches were filled with water to the depth of 12 or more inches; nevertheless on the 9th the 2nd parallel could be regarded as finished, together with all the communications with the rear. On that day the siege-artillery was already carrying on the contest with 96 rifled guns and 38 mortars, and with palpable success. The 44th lunette had been wholly silenced, the great Finkmatt barracks had been set on fire, the Steinthor (stone-gate) had to be blocked up with sandbags, and the part of the city behind the front of attack began to crumble into ruins. Such of the French artillery on the ramparts as had not been dismounted was withdrawn. But the neighbouring works and the numerous covered mortar-batteries of the enemy kept up an energetic fire, and strove to check every forward step of the besiegers.



GENERAL UHRICH.

In addition to the service in the trenches the besieging forces had new difficulties to encounter. As early as the end of August there were manifested the first indications of armed resistance by the inhabitants of the country. Leaning on the small fortified places of Schlettstadt and Neubreisach, Francs-tireurs and the Gardes Mobiles, which had been called out, shewed themselves with ever increasing boldness at the rear of the besiegers, and increased the difficulty of the foraging parties in bringing up supplies of all kinds. Flying columns had therefore repeatedly to be sent out to disarm and disperse the bands, and sometimes to go considerable distances, as to Mühlhausen. The task of furnishing these was entrusted to the Baden Division, which could most easily detach such expeditionary forces, as it did not form part of the actual



STRASSBURG LIBRARY.

attacking front, but was only charged with the close investment of the west and south fronts.

Meanwhile it had been determined to construct the Third Parallel at the foot of the glacis between the 53rd and 55th lunettes. A bold reconnaissance conducted by Captain von Ledebour of the engineers, shewed that the French had abandoned their system of mines, and that thus no hindrance to the progress of the works from a struggle against mines was to be apprehended.

On the 9th of September approaches were pushed forward from the Second Parallel, and the Third Parallel was commenced during the night of the 11th. By the 14th this was finished, as well as the construction of some additional batteries, and by the 17th the glacis was crowned and was occupied on that day by infantry. Owing to the wet low-lying ground and to the loss of time, no attempt was made to extend the attack beyond the 54th lunette towards the 12th bastion. The principal attack was to be directed exclusively against the 11th bastion, past the 52nd and 53rd lunettes, the siege-artillery being charged with subduing the works flanking the besiegers from the east.

In addition to the swamps existing in places, the progress of the siege was checked by the water-filled moats of the fortress; it was necessary therefore to attempt the disruption of the numerous dams; accordingly one of the principal sluices had ever since the 11th been bombarded by indirect fire, without, however, producing any visible effect. On the other hand, on the 15th and 16th, detachments of the 34th Regiment, that had been pushed forward to Wacken and Jars, succeeded, in defiance of the hot fire from the fortress, in opening the dams situated lower down and causing the water collected there to flow away.

On the 14th a commencement had been made at making breaches, the fire being first directed against the escarp of the 53rd lunette. This was the first serious trial of indirect fire against hidden masonry for the purpose of making a breach. Along the whole front of attack the superiority of the German fire was by this time established, making it all but impossible to the besieged to shew themselves on the wall during daylight, and the end was drawing nigh. To still further weaken the defence of the garrison, Werder now ordered the fortress to be kept fully employed from *all sides*. On the islands Wacken and Jars on the river Ill, in front of Königshofen, as well as on the southern front, the posts of investment were pushed forward, and alarms caused, which led almost daily to small collisions. The Kehl detachment was ordered to cross over to the left bank of the Rhine and to post itself on the Sporen island close in front of the citadel.

After the crowning had been completed, and the escarp wall of the 53rd lunette had on the 17th been laid low along the whole breadth of the breach, it was necessary to cross the moat. Two mines which broke down the counterscarp opened the descent to the level of the water, and this was followed on the 20th by the construction of a dam of earth and fascines. As the works did not open fire at all, some pioneers crossed over in boats even before the work was finished, and found the place deserted. Immediately the interior was occupied, the gorge was closed up and the parapet prepared for use against the place. On the following day only, the enemy poured a musketry fire on the now securely installed garrison. The neighbouring lunette 52 had only earth escarp, but a wet ditch nearly 65 yards in width and of considerable

depth. In consequence of this a bridge was constructed on floating supports, for which the numerous beer barrels ¹ everywhere about supplied the material. On the evening of the 21st this difficult piece of work was taken in hand and finished without disturbance or mishap. It turned out that the 52nd lunette had also been evacuated. But the besieged had early discovered the occupation of the interior and the existence of the bridge, and immediately opened a hot fire from the adjoining works, causing considerable loss. (5 officers and 42 rank and file.)

The occupation of the two lunettes constituted a considerable progress of the attacking party. Batteries of mortars and guns were planted in them, so as wholly to beat down the more advanced ravelins and counterscudars on the front of attack, these works being also taken under fire by five dismounting and counter-batteries from the parallels. From the 52nd lunette the crowning of the glacis proceeded further towards the 51st counterscuard, and on the other side extending to the front of the 54th lunette, so as to form a broader area of cover for the troops told off for the assault on the main wall. At the same time the guns began to try and make breaches in the inner faces of the bastioned front 11—12. The enemy made great efforts with musketry and mortar fire to check the advance of the attack, and the losses of men increased considerably. The garrison endeavoured also to disturb the works by attacks directed against the flanks of the Germans, nevertheless on the 26th the breaches were practicable. The battering down of the earth parapet behind the demolished masonry was reserved for the day of the assault. There was but a short distance remaining between the besiegers and the foot of the breach in bastion 11, through which the entrance into the city was to be forced.

Then suddenly—at 5 o'clock in the afternoon of the 27th of September—the white flag was seen on the steeple of the cathedral, and soon after white flags also fluttered from the 11th and 12th bastions. The exultation in the trenches was great beyond measure; along the whole line the fire ceased, and the hurrahs of the soldiers who had ascended the parapets rent the air. Then they broke out into the national song: "Die Wacht am Rhein."

During the night the capitulation was signed at Königshofen on terms identical with those of Sedan. The booty was abundant. The number of guns was 1200, of small arms 200,000, quantities of warlike stores of all sorts, and large sums of ready money in the state bank fell into the hands of the conquerors,

On the morning of the 28th Prussian and Baden companies occupied the gates. At 11 o'clock the Grand Duke of Baden and General von Werder appeared before the "National Gate", and the march past of the French garrison, with General Uhrich at their head, began; at first in good order, but afterwards without discipline. The garrison had amounted to 500 officers and 17,000 men; they had lost 2500 men and of the civil population too 300 were killed and 700 wounded. The besiegers lost 39 officers inclusive of 12 engineers, and 894 rank and file.

On the 30th of September, the anniversary of the day when, nearly 200 years before, the French had stolen the ancient Imperial City in the midst of peace, the Germans held solemn entry into the conquered fortress, into Strassburg regained.

The walls of the front of attack were so furrowed by projectiles that an effective

¹ Strassburg is a famous beer-brewing place. [Trs.]

occupation of them would scarcely have been feasible. Amidst the ruins of parapets and traverses lay demolished guns and shivered gun-carriages. The suburb situated behind the main wall at the Steinthor was wholly destroyed and burnt down, and the citadel was a heap of ruins.

The French Rhine fortress had been captured in a surprisingly short time and with a comparatively small loss. Nationally the achievement was of even greater importance than from a military point of view. It was hailed with enthusiasm all over Germany.

ADVANCE OF THE XIVTH ARMY CORPS ACROSS THE VOSGES MOUNTAINS TO THE
RIVER SAÔNE, SEPTEMBER 27TH TO OCTOBER 31ST.

The fall of Strassburg had greatly changed the general aspect of the war. The strong corps employed in the siege was set free for other operations, and the siege-train could be set to work elsewhere.

The capitulation of Toul, which had taken place on the 23rd of September, made the line of railway available, and immediately the Landwehr Division of the Guards was sent off to join the army outside Paris. Of the other component parts of the Corps: the Baden Field Division, the 30th and 34th Prussian Regiments (combined into a brigade of infantry), the two regiments of Reserve Cavalry (combined into a brigade of cavalry) and three Reserve Batteries were formed on the 4th October into a new combination, as the XIVth Army Corps, which His Majesty placed under the command of General von Werder, with Lieutenant-Colonel von Leszczynski as Chief of his Staff. The strength of this Corps amounted to 23 Battalions, 20 Squadrons, and 72 Guns. Of trains and ammunition-columns they possessed at first only those of the Baden Division.

The 1st Landwehr Division, consisting of the two brigades of Pomeranian Landwehr, the 2nd Reserve Regiment of Uhlans and three reserve batteries, was placed under the command of the Governor-General of Alsace. After being reinforced by the 67th Regiment of Infantry, it was again designated as the 1st Division of Reserve, and from it was at once told off the first German Garrison of Strassburg. After the fall of this latter place, the small places Schlettstadt and Neubreisach had to be taken, their possession being necessary for the thorough occupation of Alsace, because they helped to promote the ever increasing activity of the Franks-tireurs. The duty of taking these places was entrusted to the 4th Division of Reserve under General von Schmeling, which was being concentrated in southern Baden during the latter part of September.

Accurate information about the state of the enemy's preparations and the organisation of his armed resistance beyond the Vosges mountains was not obtainable, but still it was known that there were collected large bands of Franks-tireurs and Gardes Mobiles in the neighbourhood of St. Dié, Raon-l'Étape and Rambervillers. Although these were mere beginnings of new formations, yet danger might accrue from them to the communications of the army before Paris with home, and above all to the only line of railway at present available, namely that by Weissenburg—Luneville—Nanteuil. The Governor-General of Lorraine therefore applied as early as the end of September for support, which General von Werder was now in a position to grant effectively. On the 2nd of October he sent a detachment of the Baden Division (6 battalions, 2½ squadrons, and 12 guns) in two columns under the command of General von Degenfeld:

one column took the route from Mutzig via Schirmeck to Raon-l'Étape, and the other from Barr via Senones to Etival, across the Vosges mountains, to drive the Francs-tireurs out of the valley of the Meurthe and to secure betimes the passes of the range for the Army Corps. Both columns easily opened the mountain-passes, which were barred by ditches and entanglements, but were scarcely defended; after a slight contest Etival and Raon-l'Étape were occupied on the 5th of October and the bands fleeing to Rambervillers were dispersed,

Meanwhile orders for the XIVth Army Corps, had arrived from the Great Head Quarters, which were to the following effect: "Speedy advance to the Upper Seine in the direction of Troyes—Châtillon-sur-Seine, to protect the German armies detained outside Metz and Paris from attacks from the south; disarmament of the departments of the Vosges, Haute-Marne, and Aube; prevention of all attempts at the formation of bands of troops; measures to be taken for the restoration of the line of railway Blainville—Epinal—Faverney—Chaumont; coup-de-main upon Langres, or bombardment of that place with heavy artillery, because it blocks the said line of railway, provided always that no great delay in the march is caused thereby. Security against Belfort in coöperation with the 4th Division of Reserve; safeguarding of your own communications."

To carry out these comprehensive instructions the XIVth Army Corps, departed on the 5th of October from the neighbourhood of Strassburg. The range was to be crossed in three columns composed of all arms, accompanied by small trains laden with provisions on account of possible difficulty of finding food on the road. Of the two columns of the Baden Division, the southern column was directed to take the route of Barr—Provenchères—St. Dié, the northern was to march along the road Mutzig—Schirmeck—Senones—Etival. The third column, consisting of the Prussian Brigade, was to follow the Badeners as far as Schirmeck, and thence to descend on the Donon-road into the valley of the Plaine, moving on to Raon-l'Étape. The main supply columns were assigned an independent route via Zabern—Saarburg—Blamont to Baccarat; on the 8th and 9th the columns were to meet in the valley of the Meurthe between St. Dié and Raon-l'Étape. General von Degenfeld, who was already there, was instructed to occupy St. Dié on the 6th of October, in order to secure the front, to reconnoitre towards the south and west, and to collect provisions for the troops to be expected.

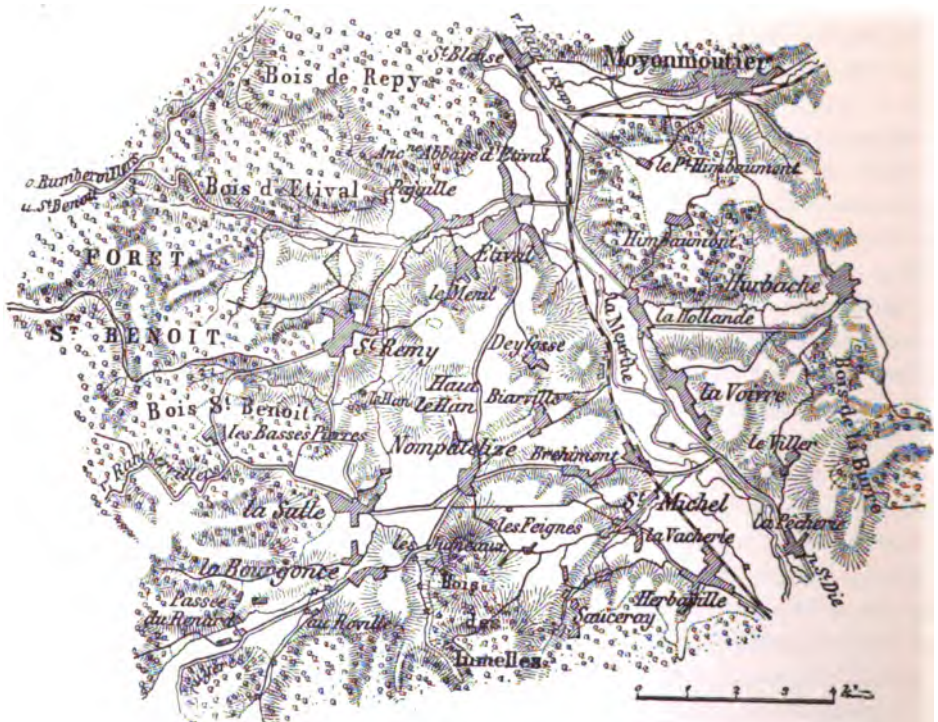
The execution of this order on the 6th of October led to the somewhat serious conflict of La Bourgonce (Etival).

CONTESTS AT LA BOURGONCE, BROUVELIEURES AND BRUYÈRES, 6—11 OCT.

Information having been received that St. Dié was the base of the popular rising, and was occupied and had resolved on offering resistance, Degenfeld, in expectation of a conflict, ordered the greater part of his troops (4 battalions, $1\frac{1}{4}$ squadrons and 12 guns) to advance against the town. The remainder (2 battalions and 1 squadron) were left behind to secure the mountain passes and to requisition provisions. Moving along both banks of the river Meurthe, the heads of columns were received with a hot fire at La Voivre and Nompatelize. A dense fog which lay over the valley, obscured the view, and necessitated a temporary delay. When at 9 o'clock the fog lifted it was seen that the heights on the left bank of the Meurthe, near Nompatelize,

were occupied, and that columns of the enemy were moving from La Bourgonce to St. Remy. Soon Degenfeld's right column, consisting of only two battalions and two guns, was engaged in a hot conflict in front of Les Feignes, Nompattelize and Le Han—St. Remy, the two guns replying to the fire of the enemy's artillery posted at La Bourgonce and St. Remy.

The struggle on the other side of the valley, along the road to St. Dié, had been less vigorous. The enemy here speedily retreated towards La Pêcherie, found support indeed, but still offered little resistance. Degenfeld, perceiving that the noise of battle coming from the left bank was growing ever more intense, brought up the troops of



LA BOURGONCE.

4 km. = 2½ Engl. miles.

his left column, part of whom had to ford the Meurthe, to support his hard pressed right column, and the troops left behind at Raon-l'Étape were ordered hastily to advance to the battle. There the enemy in greatly superior numbers had assumed the offensive, but he was not able to drive the two Baden battalions from the positions they had occupied. The artillery that arrived first gave steadiness to the resistance, and soon the appearance of fresh infantry in the line of battle made itself felt. One battalion arrived from Etival just in time to protect the extreme right wing from the persistent attempts of the enemy to outflank them; it took St. Remy and pressed forward towards the wood of St. Benoit and the heights of Le Han.

At one o'clock the enemy seemed exhausted and their fire slackened; the Baden troops also had in several places to be supplied with fresh ammunition. At half-past

one a new advance was made by the French coming both out of the woods of St. Benoit and the Bois Jumelles and from La Bourgonce and La Salle, whilst fresh forces threatened the right flank at St. Remy. Nearly the whole Baden Detachment, had to be deployed by companies in a single long line, which the enemy continually outflanked. The fire of this line of infantry together with the effect of the artillery, which had by this time established its superiority, sufficed to arrest the enemy's advance. It was about three o'clock when the last available troops of Degenfeld's, consisting of three companies coming from Raon, appeared on the field. With beating drums these fresh units advanced immediately to the attack, carrying the whole fighting line with them; amidst loud hurrahs the whole mass rushed forward.

The French seemed prepared to await the attack, but soon single groups began to yield—the whole line wavered—and they were driven from one line of defence to another, until their retreat soon turned into a regular flight.

At 4 o'clock the battle was decided. The enemy's loss amounted to 800 killed and wounded and 600 prisoners; the conqueror had lost 400 men. At nightfall he encamped on the field of battle, being himself too exhausted to pursue the enemy with effect. On the next day the scouts reported the retreat of the enemy southward towards the Moselle, apparently in a state of dissolution.

About 10,000 men had been engaged. It had been a detachment of the so-called First Army of the Vosges, pushed forward under General Dupré. This army was being concentrated at Besançon by General Cambriels, who had been charged with the organization of the national defence in the eastern departments. Dupré, who was mortally wounded in the battle, was to have carried out the first enterprise against the German communications. The demoralising effect of the battle of La Bourgonce upon the young newly-formed French soldiers and upon the further action of General Cambriels, only gradually became known to the Germans during the march to the Moselle.

The bulk of the XIVth Army Corps had meanwhile crossed the Vosges mountains, and on the 8th and 9th reached the Meurthe between Raon-l'Étape and St. Dié. Touch with the defeated enemy not having been secured, reconnaissances were made with all the more energy. Everywhere they encountered entanglements, broken roads and bridges, but were only feebly opposed by badly armed and ill trained bands. The Prussian Brigade from Raon-l'Étape had made a reconnaissance to Rambervillers, and there alone a serious conflict in the streets took place on the 9th, which lasted



GENERAL V. DEGENFELD.

into the night. On the following day the French had disappeared in the direction of Charmes.

The supply columns having arrived on the 10th, the Corps was able to resume its advance upon Epinal. No serious contests with a strong enemy were expected in this mountainous country, but collisions on a small scale seemed probable; so, since the order to disarm the inhabitants, as well as the scanty resources of the country for provisioning the troops, made it desirable to carry out the march on a broad front, General von Werder adhered to the plan of advancing by brigades in four columns of all arms. In this formation the Corps left the valley of the Meurthe on the 11th of October.

On the right, the Prussian column closed up its main body on Rambervillers. The destination of the 1st Baden Column was Bruyères; of the 2nd, being the left wing, Anould and Corcieux; and of the 3rd, which remained in rear, La Houssière. Only the 1st Baden Column near Brouvelieures had, on emerging from the valley of the Mortagne, to fight for the road, and Bruyères too had to be taken from a considerable hostile force. Touch with the enemy was thus regained, and as it was reported that General Cambriels had been personally present in the battle, it might be anticipated that a collision with his newly formed army would take place on the following day. General von Werder took his measures accordingly. The French, however, already somewhat demoralized, continued without interruption their retreat upon Remiremont, in order, as was afterwards ascertained, to make, via Rupt and Lure, for the valley of the Ognon and the neighbourhood of Besançon.

The impression gained on the 12th, that the enemy was avoiding any decisive action, determined the German commander to abandon the further pursuit, which would have led him too far away from the prescribed line of march. That very afternoon the Baden Division turned off to the right, the 1st Brigade to Girecourt, the 2nd to Deycimont and the 3rd to Bruyères. The Prussian Brigade occupied Epinal after a short contest. On the 13th the whole corps was assembled along the banks of the Moselle, between Epinal and Pouxieux. At Epinal General von Beyer, the Baden War Minister, who had arrived there, assumed command of the Baden troops in place of General von Glümer, who had in the meanwhile been appointed to the command of the Division, but had fallen ill. The command of the 1st Infantry Brigade was assumed by Prince William of Baden. With a view to the continuation of the advance the line of communications had to be transferred to Lunéville, intervening stages thither by road to be organized, the line of railway Blainville—Epinal, which had been destroyed, to be repaired, and the formation of magazines at the latter place to be begun.

Reconnaissances made on the 14th on the road to Mirécourt led at Les Forges to a combat with *Francs-tireurs*. Report having arrived that Remiremont was held by some troops of General Cambriels', the 3rd Baden Brigade (General Keller) advanced against that place, but found that the enemy had already evacuated it during the night. It is possible that the appearance of the 4th Division of the Reserve just then in the neighbourhood of Belfort may have contributed to causing the uninterrupted retreat of the French. Werder now took into consideration the direction in which to continue his advance to the Upper Seine. It seemed most advisable to select the route via Neufchâteau—Chaumont, where the short line of railway from

Blesme to Chaumont could easily be repaired, so as to bring up heavy artillery against Langres—an advantage which seemed unattainable on the line Blainville—Epinal—Jussey, the railway there having been completely destroyed.

On the other hand it was obvious that the removal of the Corps so far to the west would expose the main line of communication of the army at Lunéville to renewed attacks of the enemy.

ADVANCE FROM EPINAL TO VESOUL AND BESANÇON UP TO THE 23RD OF OCTOBER.

At the Great Head-Quarters the French forces in the east were as yet greatly under-estimated, and their dispersal was considered both easy and necessary. A telegram which arrived thence, ordering the immediate attack of any enemy within reach, caused Werder to change his plans. The said telegram was based on the consideration that the capture of Orleans on the 11th of October had greatly improved the position of the army before Paris. The advance upon Troyes was cancelled, and on the 16th the XIVth Army Corps set out, again in four columns, to march to Vesoul by the routes Bains—Conflans and Plombières—Luxeuil, in search of the enemy who had disappeared from their front. Protected against Langres by a flank guard, on the 18th the right wing reached Vesoul and the left Lure.

All the reports brought in about the enemy still announced that he was continuing to fall back in disorder upon Besançon. It seemed out of the question that these troops, requiring re-organisation, could be encountered outside the shelter of this fortress; nor could they be dangerous to the communications of the Germans, at any rate for some time to come.

Accordingly, when during the night between the 17th and 18th a telegram arrived from Versailles, saying: "Offensive action against the enemy may be carried on as far as Besançon; and afterwards a westward march upon Bourges via Dijon," General von Werder was able to regard the first part of this order as already carried out and to proceed at once to the execution of the second part, the march to Bourges. As a preliminary step for this movement orders were issued for the 19th, for the Corps to concentrate more closely and also for another change of the line of communications. It was intended now to march upon Dijon via Gray and Mirébeau.

The rapid advance of the XIVth Army Corps through the Vosges mountains as far as the Haute-Saône had filled with dismay both the French government and the people. The south appeared imperilled and they had little to use for defence. Gambetta, the French War Minister, went on the 18th himself to Besançon to look into the state of affairs, to organise a more powerful resistance and to reanimate patriotic ardour. Cambriels' Corps amounted then to about 30,000 men. A new army of the Vosges was being formed at Dôle, where Garibaldi, the commander of *Francs-tireurs*, who had entered the French service, had from the 13th of October had his head-quarters. In the valley of the Saône and in the Côte-d'Or a levy *en masse* and a military organization of all men capable of bearing arms was in full swing. Gambetta dwelt on all this, and promised reinforcements, arms and equipments, but Cambriels declined all further offensive action with his raw troops, and on the 19th Gambetta returned to Tours.

On the same day the view entertained at the head-quarters of the XIVth Army

Corps with respect to the situation underwent a change. News of the uninterrupted arrival of reinforcements for Cambriels, which was derived from a French mail intercepted at Lure; collisions with the enemy's reconnoitring parties at Rioz in front of Besançon, which might be regarded as signs of a fresh French advance; and finally the report that the quarters of the French towards the Ognon extended as far as Etuz and Marnay; all this led to the conclusion that by a rapid advance the Germans might still be able to come up with their enemy and force on an engagement. A fresh success against the already shaken newly-formed French forces might lead to their complete dispersal. The altered instructions were issued immediately, in the night between the 19th and 20th. The Prussian Brigade on the other side of the Saône was brought forward to Combeaufontaine, and on the 21st the whole Corps started on the march towards the Ognon by the roads to Pin, Etuz, and Voray. In the evening the heads of the three Baden Brigades (the 1st being on the right, the 3rd on the left wing) reached Bucey-les-Gy, Oiselay, and Courboux; the Prussian Brigade behind them arrived at Neuville-les-la-Charité. The cavalry brigade scoured the country on the right flank as far as the Saône.

ENGAGEMENTS AT THE OGNON AND DEPARTURE TO THE SAÔNE VALLEY ON THE
22ND—24TH OF OCTOBER.

All the columns, together amounting to 16 battalions, 9 squadrons, and 10 batteries, had received orders for the 22nd, to push forward early the advanced guards to the passages over the Ognon and to hold the main bodies in readiness behind them. About 11 o'clock General von Werder was awaiting reports at Oiselay, which should determine his further measures.



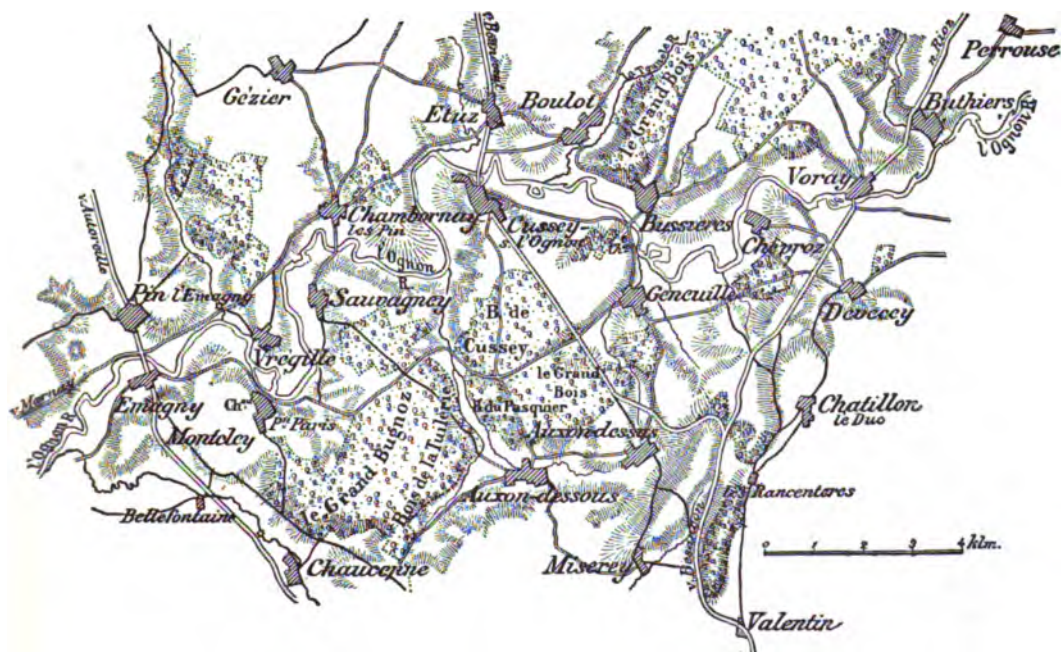
OFFICERS OF THE GARDE MOBILE.

It is well-nigh impossible to obtain a general view in the hilly district between the Ognon and the Saône; it is wooded, intersected and impracticable. In consequence of this, unexpected difficulty was found in keeping up communication between the marching columns, and transmitting orders.

Prince William's column arrived at Auterille and its vanguard at the bridges at Marnay and Pin-l'Emagny as early as 9 o'clock. No enemy being visible either here or south of the river, the main body began cooking at 11 o'clock. The main body of Degenfeld's column had marched from Fretigney to Velloreille, and its advanced guard from Oiselay to Etuz. Here the latter encountered forces of the enemy that were advancing, and at 10 o'clock a slight engagement took place. General Keller had to march with the third column to Rioz, its advanced guard moving to Voray

and Buthier, and a flank detachment to Montbozon for the purpose of destroying the bridge at that place; at 11 o'clock no news had been heard of him at Oiselay. As the enemy at Etuz remained on the hither side of the Ognon, Werder ordered that Degenfeld should here fight a temporizing engagement; that Prince William should cross the Ognon at Pin, and, with a flank guard towards Besançon, press upon the flank and rear of the enemy. After 2 o'clock Keller announced that south of Rioz he was being met by an advancing enemy.

At Etuz the fight had grown more animated. The French had received reinforcements and compelled Degenfeld gradually to deploy his whole brigade, and Werder therefore pushed forward reinforcements from the Prussian Brigade. Under the effective German fire the enemy was unable to maintain his position north of the



BATTLE AT THE OGNON.

4 km. = 2½ Engl. miles.

Ognon; at 2 o'clock his right wing fell back via Bussières upon Geneuille, whilst the left wing still held the bridge at Etuz—Cussey. Although the decisive blow might have been dealt at once, yet it was postponed to give the flank columns time to join in the contest, which might thus lead to the total destruction of the enemy.

After 3 o'clock the fire of the enemy's lines again increased in vigour, whereupon Degenfeld's troops, supported by his batteries, advanced for a renewed attack. The bridge was taken at the double, as well as the strong line of defence round the edge of Cussey on the opposite bank; the enemy was overthrown, and pursued by dragoons into the neighbouring woods. At half-past four the brigade assembled at the southern exit of Cussey. Two battalions of the 30th Regiment had crossed over the bridge at Bussières.

Meanwhile the French had found a supporting position ready at Auxon-dessus and along the steep declivity as far as the vineyards of the castle of Châtillon-le-Duc, in the angle formed by the roads leading from Cussey and Voray to Besançon. A few batteries of heavy guns near Châtillon swept the country as far as the river. Twilight was approaching; touch with the 1st Brigade expected from Pin was not yet gained; neither had full reports come in about the events at Voray, because the communications broke down in this impassable country. But it might perhaps still be possible to cut off the retreat of this latter wing of the enemy to Besançon, and the success gained at the front might be exploited to greater advantage. Accordingly Werder ordered a further advance against the villages Auxon-dessous and Auxon-dessus; and also against the woods and the enemy's position on the heights at Châtillon-le-Duc.

The battle was renewed, but only the battalions of the 30th Regiment on the left wing, together with two Baden companies who had joined them from Voray succeeded at dusk in penetrating the strong position of the enemy and in getting as far as Châtillon-le-Duc. Darkness and the difficulties of the ground put a term to the contest in front of the centre and the left wing of the French.

We must now narrate the events with the columns forming the wings. The column of Prince William, after receiving at 2 o'clock the order to pass over to the southern bank of the Ognon, set off from Autoreille to march by Emagny and Montcley. Owing to the great distance it only reached the eastern edge of the wood of Cussey, when the battle was already over, but the flank guard, which had advanced through Chaucenne under Colonel von Wechmar, at 7 o'clock encountered and defeated two battalions of Zouaves up at Auxon-dessus.

The vanguard of Keller's column had driven the head of the enemy out of Perrouse. Soon afterwards the battle was continued, because the French, with the aid of fresh detachments coming from Buthier, had fallen upon our flank. But the vanguard having been reinforced, was in possession of the village at half-past two, and before 4 o'clock it also held the bridge over the Ognon at Voray, where it halted. When afterwards the noise of the battle at Châtillon was heard, two companies, as has already been stated, marched in that direction, but the main body of the column remained at Rioz.

For the night, Werder withdrew to the Ognon the troops that had been engaged in the battle, including Prince William's Brigade. The Germans lost on that day 120 men, the French 150 men and 200 prisoners.

In the course of the 23rd General von Werder inferred from the reports of his reconnoitring troops, that the enemy would not fail to take advantage of the protection of the fortress of Besançon, that consequently no further success could be gained and that it was useless to remain any longer stationary. The cavalry, moreover, brought news that Garibaldi was collecting fresh troops at Dôle; but according to all reports, this new army of the Vosges appeared to be still far from ready, and not dangerous. Werder therefore resolved to lead the army into the valley of the Saône and then to march, in conformity with his orders, via Dijon upon Bourges. Troops were despatched to destroy the railway Lyon—Besançon in the neighbourhood of Arc-Senans, but they gained only a moderate success owing to bad explosives. On the 24th began the march to the Saône; the enemy did not follow and did not

even attempt to gain touch. But in the valley of the Saône it was found that the roads were cut up and the woodlands blocked by entanglements; the population was roused, and bands of *Francs-tireurs* and armed peasants took up positions and fought small battles. The government at Tours had, by a decree of October 14th, ordered the local defence of the department, and the resistance of the National Guards, under the orders of definite Committees of Defence. The effect of this measure was felt immediately; moreover, by pamphlets reports were circulated that the Germans were in full retreat after having suffered a defeat at the Ognon.

On the 26th of October the bulk of the XIVth Army Corps stood in and around Gray. Cavalry was patrolling the country in a north-easterly direction towards Langres and Châtillon-sur-Seine; for want of men communication with Epinal could only be kept up by means of flying columns. The comparative rest of these few days was highly welcome to the troops; the heavy downpour, the demolished roads, and the stiff soil had severely taxed shoes and clothes, and it was no small labour and effort to repair the damage.

ENGAGEMENTS AT THE VINGEANNE ON THE 26TH AND 27TH OF OCTOBER.

Whilst Cambriels kept his best troops concentrated at Besançon he had, ever since the 20th, been forming at Dijon two small corps, consisting of about 18,000 Gardes Mobiles without cavalry or artillery and designated as the *Armée de la Côte d'Or*. These forces, posted behind the swollen waters of the Vingeanne and the Tille, were destined to bar the approaches to Dijon. Colonel Deflandre commanded about 8000 men at Bèze, and something over 10,000 men, commanded by Doctor Laval, a colonel of the Gardes Nationales, stood on the road to Pontailler. On the 26th the vanguard of the Baden troops encountered Laval's advanced troops at Mantoche, and drove them back to Essertenne. The darkness and a heavy storm checked the further progress of the Germans. On the 27th Werder ordered a general advance on all the high roads leading to the Vingeanne; this led to conflicts at Renève-l'Église, Essertenne and Talmay, on the way to the river, causing the French heavy losses on the field and also in prisoners, partly owing to the inefficiency of their leaders. The retreat, continued far into the night, amidst a tempest like a hurricane, completed the dissolution of this "*Armée de la Côte d'Or*." During his flight Laval blew up the bridges over the Saône at Pontailler and Lamarche. Garibaldi had remained entirely inactive at Dôle.

As the real state of things with the enemy was not immediately discernible, it was inferred from the appearance of Laval in front of the German left wing, that a general advance upon Gray had been determined upon; accordingly on the 28th a general movement was ordered down the Saône and towards the Vingeanne. Now the hasty retreat of the enemy was perceived, but it was also found out that Dijon was strongly occupied and intrenched, and that



BADEN DRAGOON.

Garibaldi's force amounted to 10,000 men. Only at Pesmes some small detachments under Colonel Bourras shewed some activity, and at the same time posts of the enemy again made their appearance at the Ognon in front of Besançon.

After a difficult march on the sodden ground, the Corps held in the evening the line of the Vingeanne, the 1st Brigade being pushed forward to Mirebeau, and the 3rd Brigade being at Talmay on the Pontailler road. General von Werder had to form new plans. For some days no news had been received from the other theatres of war; all round the Corps the forces of the enemy were seen to be steadily increasing,



PRINCE WILLIAM OF BADEN.

and a march further west was equivalent to an abandonment of the lines of communication. Here fresh instructions came to hand from the Great Head-Quarters, where they now possessed a more accurate idea as to the state of affairs on the banks of the Middle Saône.

These orders had been on the way from Versailles ever since the 23rd of October, and reported, in view of the impending fall of Metz, the approaching departure of Prince Frederick Charles with the Second Army to the Loire by way of Troyes; this changed the nature of the task imposed on the XIVth Army Corps. Being reinforced by the 1st and 4th Reserve Divisions, which were now placed under Werder's command,

it was to undertake immediately the investment, followed by the siege, of Schlettstadt, Neubreisach and Belfort; to protect Alsace and its own communications; to keep up communication with the Governors-General in Lorraine and Reims, and to cover the left flank of the Second Army. In front, forces of the enemy proportionate to their own strength were to be detained. It accordingly seemed appropriate to take up a position at Vesoul, to strongly occupy Dijon, and take precautionary measures towards Langres and to adhere to these dispositions so long as the enemy should remain concentrated at Besançon with a considerable force. Belfort was to be closely observed till the arrival of the 1st Reserve Division, so as to prevent any rising of the inhabitants of the Vosges based on the fortress. Where the enemy appeared weak he was to be attacked immediately, and an advance beyond Besançon was permissible provided the main work of the Corps did not suffer thereby. Werder's duties had not become lighter; his situation still was more difficult than was imagined at Versailles. The 4th Reserve Division had just taken Schlettstadt, and the 1st Reserve Division was still at Strassburg.

The General now determined, as a first measure, to assemble his main forces at Vesoul, thence to observe or invest Belfort, and with some covering troops in the direction of the river Ognon to occupy Gray on the Saône with two brigades. Dijon was to be taken possession of when the two Reserve Divisions came nearer. This plan was changed when on the evening of the 29th news arrived that Dijon had been evacuated and had ceased to offer resistance. The moment seemed favourable and the object worthy of incurring some risk. The bloodless acquisition of this important and rich city would be of great consequence politically, would open up much needed resources for the German troops, and would place in their power a junction of important communications. General von Beyer was therefore on the morning of the 30th instructed to march with the 1st and 3rd Baden Brigades upon Dijon, but if he found it occupied, he was only to seize it by force if circumstances seemed favourable. With the rest of the corps Werder marched upon Vesoul via Gray.

BATTLE AT DIJON, OCTOBER 30TH.

When the heads of Prince William's Brigade coming from Mirebeau reached Arc-sur-Tille at 9.30, they found the heights, which east of Varois descend to the brook Norges, occupied by the enemy. The situation at Dijon had completely altered. Influenced by the battles at the Vingeanne, Colonel Fauconnet, who had arrived and assumed the command on the 27th, gave orders for the evacuation of the city on the 28th. But on the following day the inhabitants made a protest against this proposal, and telegrams arrived from Tours insisting on a resolute resistance. The commander was compelled to undertake the defence of the city, to arm the National Guards again, and to recall the troops. The latter arrived from Beaune and Auxonne during the night, some of them, however, not till the morning of the 30th. According to French sources their number slightly exceeded 4000 men, the rest were Gardes Mobiles and Gardes Nationals of the Côte d'Or.

The battle beginning at Varois quickly advanced to the heights of St. Apollinaire; after a vigorous resistance offered by the French this latter place was taken at 12.30. The defence being aided by the numerous farms, vineyards, and walled park lands, the whole 1st Brigade was speedily involved in the conflict, which after 3 o'clock

Prince William and his regiments passed the night in St. Apollinaire and Varois, Keller's Brigade at Quétigny and Couternon, and both brigades placed their outposts right up to the city. The combat was to be renewed on the next day, but very early on the 31st the municipality opened negotiations with the commanders, terminating in a capitulation. At 1 o'clock the troops took possession of the old Burgundy fortress. The loss of the Baden Brigades amounted to 10 officers and 258 rank and file; that of the French, according to their own account, to 602 men. Of Garibaldi's troops only a few companies of *Francs-tireurs* had taken part in the battle of the 30th.

The capture of Dijon did not fail to cause grave anxiety to the leaders of the French "National Defence." Lyon seemed to be in danger, and the immediate consequence was that the army at Besançon was moved to Chagny in the valley of the Saône, and the army of Garibaldi from Dôle to Autun.

SCHLETTSTADT, NEUBREISACH, AND THE INVESTMENT OF BELFORT.

In the beginning of October General von Schmeling had crossed the Rhine at Neuenburg with the 4th Reserve Division, consisting of 15 battalions, 8 squadrons and 6 batteries. He proceeded to invest the small fortresses of Neubreisach and Schlettstadt, and flying columns from Colmar disarmed the inhabitants of southern Alsace. When some siege-guns had arrived from Strassburg and the 1st Division of Reserve had sent reinforcements, Schmeling proceeded to attack Schlettstadt. It was not a very long business. During the night between 19th and 20th the construction of the batteries was taken in hand; when these had opened fire, and when on the 23rd the first parallel was completed, the place quickly succumbed to the superior fire of the Germans and surrendered next day (the 24th). The garrison, consisting of 2400 men and 120 guns, was captured. On the 27th Schmeling moved upon Neubreisach, and at dawn of the 2nd of November 24 heavy guns opened fire against the works. To expedite matters a battery of 12 additional guns, brought from Rastatt, was planted on the Schlossberg at Altbreisach. Here too the French replied to the attack from the German bank, with a bombardment of the open town of Altbreisach. On the 6th of November, Fort Mortier, situated in advance near the Rhine, was disabled and had to surrender, and on the 10th the fortress itself capitulated. The Germans made 5000 prisoners and took 108 guns.

The fortress of Belfort had a special influence over the movements of the XIVth Army Corps. Its position at the rear of the corps and its very strong garrison threatened the lines of communication of the Germans and formed the natural source and *point d'appui* of the guerilla war in the Vosges mountains. The German commanders took therefore into early consideration the investment and siege of that fortress and told off for that purpose the 1st Reserve Division still posted at Strassburg, together with some detachments of the 4th Reserve Division which were to come from Neubreisach.

Towards the end of October the new garrison of Strassburg, which had been summoned from Silesia, arrived, and on the 31st General von Tresckow set out for Belfort with a force which, including the detachments from the 4th Reserve Division, amounted only to 11 Battalions, 7½ Squadrons and 4 Batteries, because numerous detachments had at first to be left behind in various places in Alsace. He was speedily involved in daily engagements with *Francs-tireurs* and troops pushed forward from the

garrison of the fortress. On the 3rd of November Belfort was invested on its northern and western sides, but for the time being only with an extensive and slack line. On the same day communication was established with Werder's Corps at Vesoul, which now held Lure as a connecting post. As soon as the troops distributed about Alsace had come up, Von Tresckow completed the lines of investment, making use of the villages which were carefully prepared for defence.

To prevent disturbance from the direction of Besançon, a permanent garrison was placed in the elevated castle of Montbéliard. The line between the Rhine-Rhone canal and the Swiss frontier at Delle was also occupied, and posts at Montbéliard and Héricourt observed the valley of the Doubs. When afterwards, towards the middle of November, the XIVth Army Corps was concentrated in the neighbourhood of the

Saône, General von Tresckow strove, unmindful of his own difficulties, to support its operations by sending flying parties to L'Isle-sur-Doubs and Clerval in the direction of Besançon.

From its very beginning the investment of Belfort taxed the troops very severely. Colonel Denfert, the energetic and active commandant of the fortress, did not allow a day to pass by without engaging on some operation against the army of investment; not a hamlet or a valley in the country round the walls was abandoned without resistance. In presence of such a resolute defence and in view of the natural strength and good armament of the fortress, General von Tresckow could not avoid the conclusion that neither investment nor bombardment would lead to surrender of the fortress. The



GENERAL V. TRESCKOW.

Commander-in-Chief being informed of this, gave orders for a formal siege and directed the needful matériel, which had been set free by the fall of Neubreisach, to be sent there. On the other hand, Tresckow lost, with the exception of one battalion and one squadron, his detachments of the 4th Reserve Division, as these started on the 13th of November from Neubreisach for Vesoul, with orders for their heads to arrive on the 15th in the neighbourhood of Giromagny.

THE XIVTH CORPS AT DIJON.

In the first days of November the XIVth Army Corps occupied the following positions: At Dijon and Mirebeau, 11 Battalions, 8 Squadrons and 6 Batteries; at Gray, 3 Battalions, 2 Squadrons and 1 Battery; at Vesoul, 6 Battalions, 6 Squadrons and

3½ Batteries; at Pont-sur-Saône and Scey-sur-Saône, 1 Battalion, 1½ Squadron and 1 Battery; at St. Loup, 1 Battalion, ½ Squadron and 1 Battery; at Lure, 1 Battalion, 2 Squadrons and ¾ Battery; making a total of 23 Battalions, 20 Squadrons and 13 Batteries, or 21,500 men with 72 guns. Judging by past experience, it could be assumed that the Germans would be able to hold their own, even though so widely distributed. The 1st Reserve Division had just completed the investment of Belfort, Metz had fallen, and the 2nd Army marched on Troyes.

At the Great Head-Quarters the opinion was entertained that General von Werder was in a position to make a fresh movement in the direction of Dôle and of the railway junction of Arc-Senans, without abandoning either his demonstrations from Dijon towards the south, or the observation of Besançon—necessary for the protection of his lines of communication. Werder

was prepared to carry out these orders. But the waters of the Saône having greatly risen, the passage of the river and communication between the severed portions of the forces had become very difficult; and as, moreover, the enemy appeared to have received large reinforcements, Werder determined temporarily to evacuate Dijon and to operate east of the Saône, using Gray and Vesoul as *points d'appui*. Of course the full strength of the enemy was not known.

As a matter of fact, General Michel, Cambriels' successor, had at that time (the beginning of November) assembled at Besançon 45,000 men with 42 guns. Garibaldi's force in the triangle Dôle—St. Jean-de-Losne—Pesmes had risen to 12,000 men. At Chagny—Beaune was stationed a brigade of the XVIIIth Corps, which was being assembled at Nevers, amounting to 18,000 men with 18 guns. And finally, round Langres a force of 12,000 to 15,000 men had been collected. Far more than 60,000 men and 12 batteries were available for employment in the field; all that was needed was an energetic staff with a definite object in view. Meanwhile in consequence of the increase of their numbers, and aided by the nature of the country, which was favourable to guerilla warfare, the subordinate commanders had grown more and more alert and active. This increased boldness of the French, though its import could not always be immediately understood, did not fail to influence the German measures. A number of small collisions, alarms and conflicts characterize those November days; the mobility of our troops, their constant readiness for battle, and their attentive working of the reconnoitring and covering services were severely taxed.

The anticipation that the enemy would speedily make an attack upon Gray was not realized; but, on the other hand, it seemed that Michel's Corps intended to effect a junction with Garibaldi at Dôle. General von Werder therefore on the 9th took the initiatory steps for assuming the offensive himself. He gave orders to General von



COLONEL DENFERT.

Beyer to evacuate Dijon, and to cross over to the left bank of the Saône, either at Pontailler or at St. Jean-de-Losne. Von Beyer being informed that, owing to the depth of the swollen river, it was technically difficult to construct a bridge in the neighbourhood of St. Jean-de-Losne, selected to cross the river at Pontailler. He was already on the march to this latter place, when he received distinct orders to cross at St. Jean-de-Losne, but this was no longer possible. It had turned out that the French General, Michel, was moving, not to Dôle, but to Chagny, and that Garibaldi also was moving in a southerly direction. Only a rapid advance via St. Jean-de-Losne might have been in time to strike upon the flank of the enemy.

Thus it came about that on the 13th almost the whole of Werder's force was posted between Pontailler and Pesmes; but his offensive movement encountered no enemy, except a few hundred Gardes Mobiles still posted at Dôle. It did not even

seem feasible to take by a coup-de-main the small fortress of Auxonne close by, as the garrison was to all appearance quite on the alert and the place was well equipped. To bombard it by field-guns would have been a waste of ammunition, which offered little inducement considering the difficulty of bringing up supplies. The change in the French dispositions, which coincided with the execution of Werder's plans, was as already mentioned, caused by the occupation of Dijon; the French believed that Lyon was threatened and that it was probable that Werder would be reinforced by some of the troops set free by the fall of Metz. General Michel was therefore compelled between the 8th and 12th of November to lead his troops into the valley of the Saône, and Garibaldi had to occupy Autun with his Corps in order to protect the communications leading to Bourges and Nevers.



GENERAL CRÉMER.

The left bank of the Saône being now cleared from all enemies, it seemed useless for the XIVth Corps to remain there any longer, especially as news, subsequently proved to have been false, announced that Garibaldi was marching upon Dijon. It was determined to concentrate the corps around this city, and to prepare a defensive position protecting it from the south. To round off this position towards the west, in the direction of the rugged mountains ¹ of the Côte d'Or, garrisons were put into Talant and Fontaine, two places situated on hill-tops; to cover the left flank all the means of communication with the other side of the Saône were demolished. Werder was determined thus to await the arrival of the 4th Reserve Division, which was already on the march, and then to advance to the south.

Touch with the enemy was speedily established. On the roads to Seurre, Chagny,

¹ The highest hills of the Côte d'Or to the west and south-west of Dijon attain a height of about 2000 feet above the sea-level. [*Trs.*]

and Beaune reconnoitring parties reported on all sides the presence of the enemy near the front. St. Jean-de-Losne had to be taken from him by force of arms. In addition to the Francs-tireurs and the mobilized Gardes Nationales of the local defence, there now appeared the first troops of Crémier's Division, that was being formed at Beaune, and which, as the subsequent events shewed, was fated to give the XIVth Army Corps a great deal of trouble. It was charged with the defence of the valley of the Saône and especially of the road of approach to Lyon, after the departure on the 16th of November of Michel's forces to the Army of the Loire, in order there to form the XXth Corps under General Crouzat.

On the 20th of November Werder was informed of the departure of Crouzat's troops. At the same time the 4th Reserve Division had reached Vesoul, and had been ordered to occupy Gray on the 23rd with 7 battalions, 4 squadrons, and 3 batteries. It seemed that now the intended advance upon Chagny and Châlons-sur-Saône could be carried out with 4 brigades; but once more the state of affairs underwent a change. Hitherto touch with the enemy had been established in the plain, now hostile forces shewed themselves vigorously in the mountains also. Fresh troops pressed up against Dijon from the south-west and the west, in a country of which it was difficult to get a general view, and which was especially favourable for guerilla warfare. Collisions between the advanced troops now took place on a larger scale; on the 20th at Nuits, and on the 22nd at Chambœuf and Vougeot. North of the Ouche francs-tireurs appeared, on the 20th at Val-Suzon, and on the 21st at Malain and Pont-de-Pany; in Dijon the numerous labouring population assumed a threatening attitude.



JOSEPH GARIBALDI.

The XIVth Army Corps was therefore concentrated on the 23rd upon its right wing, and closely observed the mountains. Meanwhile news arrived that Ricciotti Garibaldi had on the 19th made a successful surprise attack upon Châtillon, and that Francs-tireurs had put in an appearance at Thil-Châtel, north of Dijon. All this led to the inference that the enemy was preparing an attack against the flank and rear of the corps. During the night of the 23rd the 3rd Baden Brigade moved to Beire-le-Châtel, north of Dijon; the 4th Reserve Division occupied Mirebeau and despatched flying columns into the Côte d'Or. On the 24th Francs-tireurs again appeared in the south-west of Dijon, at Gevrey and in the mountains; and on the 25th the German patrols encountered the enemy beyond Plombières, which led to conflicts at Velars, and in the afternoon beyond Corcelles-les-Monts, during which closed bodies of hostile troops were observed.



A GARIBALDIAN OF COLONEL
TANAO'S BATTALION.
(Sketch by Emelé, 3 Dec. 1870.)

Garibaldi's army of the Vosges amounted to 16,000 men and 12 mountain-guns, and was divided into four brigades. With it Garibaldi had started on the 20th from Autun in two columns, and had arrived on the 24th, via Arnay-le-Duc, at Pont-de-Pany in the valley of the Ouche—at a distance of less than 10 Engl. miles from Dijon; Franks-tireurs had been pushed forward to screen his march. Dijon was to be attacked, or as Garibaldi's fancy painted it, surprised, on the 25th. Thus on the 25th Werder's outposts had driven back the heads of Garibaldi's forces, but still the true state of things was not yet understood. Garibaldi calculated that his movements would be supported by Crémér

from Beaune, and by demonstrations in the valley of the Saône by General Pélissier's Franks-tireurs and Gardes Mobiles, which were distributed in the extensive woodlands of that district. We shall see in the sequel that the coöperation thus planned between the Italian Chieftain and the French Commander totally failed.

After the events of the last few days General von Werder thought it necessary to find out what was going on in the country west of Dijon. On this reconnoitring service General von Degenfeld started on the 26th, with 3 battalions, 2 squadrons and 1 battery. Speedily, between Prénois and Pasques, he encountered Garibaldi, and a conflict ensued. In presence of such a force Degenfeld avoided a serious conflict by slowly falling back upon Dijon, and Garibaldi did not follow him beyond Darois. At night-fall, however, he



A GARIBALDIAN CHASSEUR.
(Sketch by Emelé, 3rd Dec. 1870.)



A GARIBALDIAN (Enfant
perdu de Paris).
(Sketch by Emelé 2nd Dec. 1870.)

intended to follow up his imaginary success by an attack upon the city. At about half-past six his column, which in the dark had approached unobserved, encountered at Hauteville, Degenfeld's outposts that had only just arrived; taken by surprise they were driven back upon Daix, where, however, they were supported. The supports which received them delivered their fire calmly and at close quarters, and this sufficed to repulse with heavy loss the Franks-tireurs, who repeatedly charged with much noise

along the highway. At the very first report of the approach of the enemy upon Darois, Werder had given orders with a view to delivering on the following day a decisive battle with adequate forces. The night attack of Garibaldi brought it about that the whole corps was alarmed and prepared for battle.

Early on the 27th the Prussian Brigade, which had meanwhile been put under the command of General von der Goltz, advanced through Talant, which was held by Degenfeld; whilst Keller, who had been posted at Is-sur-Tille, advanced upon Darois to outflank the enemy. One regiment of the 1st Baden Brigade remained at Dijon as reserve, and the other joined the advance via Plombières in the valley of the Ouche. A disorderly retreat of the enemy past Prénois was observed. At Pasques Garibaldi's rear-guard made front, but was defeated after a short contest, by the Prussian Brigade jointly with parts of the 1st Baden Brigade; at the same time the 3rd Brigade expelled some hostile troops from Lantenay and Fleurey-sur-Ouche. The retreat of the *Francs-tireurs* upon Sombernon assumed the appearance of a flight.

The Germans naturally wished to derive the fullest advantage from their victory. First of all Von der Goltz' Brigade was despatched to Châtillon-our-Seine (some 50 miles off), as it was reported to be invested by a superior force of the enemy. Speedy relief was imperative, it being necessary to protect the communications of the Second Army from further interference. On the other hand, Keller's Brigade, which had on the 28th again come in contact with the rear-guard of the enemy at Sombernon, received orders to pursue Garibaldi, and was instructed to push forward as far as Autun (about 47 miles) unless it fell in with greatly superior and fresh forces of the enemy. To protect the flank of this expedition, Werder ordered some troops to march along the road from Pont-de-Pany in the valley of the Ouche. These troops consisted of a part of the 1st Brigade which had been left at Plombières under Colonel von Wechmar, and a small detachment of the 4th Division of Reserve which had just arrived; in all, 3 battalions, 2 squadrons and 2 batteries.

On the afternoon of the 1st of December Keller, with 5 battalions, 4 squadrons and 3 batteries, was in front of Autun, without having encountered Garibaldi's retreating troops; Von Wechmar stood at Arnay-le-Duc, with some covering troops in the direction of Chagny and Beaune.

Garibaldi's advance towards Dijon was not supported by any contemporaneous action from the south. The reason probably was that, in addition to the want of all central power and control in the theatre of war, the French felt but slight sympathy with that foreign commander of *Francs-tireurs*. Not till the 29th were the villages situated at the foot of the mountains again strongly occupied by forces of the enemy. Colonel von Renz was accordingly ordered to conduct a reconnaissance with considerable forces on the 30th in the direction of Nuits, and, if circumstances allowed it, to extend this operation as far as Beaune; and General Keller was made acquainted with these orders.

This movement brought about on the 30th a somewhat serious collision at Nuits, which proved the presence of considerable forces of the French, and showed that it was unadvisable at present to advance upon Beaune. According to information derived from the prisoners, these forces by Nuits amounted to 12,000; other reports named a still higher figure; even an attack upon Dijon did not seem out of the question. Under these circumstances, the distant and strong expeditions into the mountains presented a different aspect.

We left General Keller in front of Autun. The Garibaldians, about 6000 men strong, held the town, and had planted 12 guns on the heights behind. The attack was commenced, although the short winter-day was drawing to a close, but orders arrived from the General in command to return immediately to Dijon, where the brigade was to arrive on the 3rd. Keller stopped the battle and marched back late in the evening to Dracy-St. Loup, behind the Ladrée, and on the 2nd of December to Rouvre-sous-Meilly. Wechmar's detachment which was at Arnay-le-Duc and had also been recalled, arrived at Sombernon. Thus the flank of Keller's expedition was left without any protection towards Nuits—Beaune, where, as we know, the intended advance into the plain had also been abandoned. But his advance having remained undisturbed from that quarter, Keller took no special measures for the protection of his flank, being anxious not to impose further labours on his troops, wearied as they were with long marches. No enemy had followed from Autun, but General Crémier in Beaune had resolved to take action. Already on the 2nd he had moved to Bligny and Pont d'Ouche, and in the night to the heights of Châteauneuf, which command the bridge and the defile at Vandenesse. When, on the 3rd, Keller entered this road-defile he was surprised by a fire from Châteauneuf on his flank and by an attack from St. Sabine. The brigade had to fight its way to Sombernon, which was done in good order and with comparatively small loss. In the evening they arrived at Velars-sur-Ouche, 6 miles west of Dijon. In 5 days the brigade had marched a distance of more than 100 miles, the latter part in a snow-storm, and had fought two battles.

The expedition of Von der Goltz's Brigade to Châtillon had also proved very toilsome and without result, Châtillon having been found unoccupied by the enemy. The brigade returned via Sombernon, and arrived at Dijon on the 6th of December. Here, on account of more vigorous advances of the enemy in the valley of the Saône, the still available portion of the 4th Reserve Division, consisting of 5 battalions, 3 squadrons and 3 batteries, had meanwhile been called up. The XIVth Army Corps was therefore assembled by the 6th of December close round Dijon, ready to meet the attack threatening from the south, or to take the offensive. Sudden frosts and continuous heavy snow-storms interrupted the operations; the roads became impracticable, and the movements of large bodies of troops impossible. Both the belligerents were forced into an unwonted repose.

On the 10th of December General von Glümer, being restored to health, assumed the command of the Baden Division; General von Beyer returning to office as Minister of War.

As soon as the weather grew milder, the endeavour was made to come in touch with the enemy again, but he was no longer found so near. Whether the French had withdrawn their young troops from regard for their inexperience, or had carried out an extensive change of position, the impression produced on the Germans was that the forces of their enemy lately assembled at Nuits and at Beaune, had evacuated the valley of the Saône and moved off to the west. All round reports were bruited about of far-reaching plans for the relief of Paris by the Army of the Loire, which had been reinforced.

By the 12th of December Versailles had already been informed of the probability of this march, and when this report was repeated two days afterwards, orders were sent from the Great Head Quarters to General von Zastrow, to march with the

13th Division west to Auxerre so as to support the Second Army. This 13th Division had been charged with the protection of the important railway communications near Nuit-sur-Armançon and Semur, and Werder was now instructed to undertake this duty as well as act on the offensive in all directions from Dijon, where his main forces were to be stationed. And on the 13th he was further commanded, "with all the means at his disposal, to push forward and protect the siege of Belfort, to isolate Langres, to protect the communications of the Second and the Third Armies, to repress all commotion in the south of the district-governments of Lorraine and Reims, and to occupy as permanently as possible the tract of land between Dôle and Arc-et-Senans so as to cut off all communications of the fortresses of Besançon and Belfort with the interior of France." It is obvious that the XIVth Army Corps had as extensive a range of duties as ever to discharge.

The mild weather continuing, the report of the probable departure of the enemy from before Dijon turned out to have been mistaken; both in the mountains and in the valley of the Saône he was seen again in his old positions—and indeed now with better troops! Obviously the French had not moved off to the west. In fact, on the 12th, a combined attack upon Dijon had been discussed at Châlons-sur-Saône between Crémier, Garibaldi, and Pélissier, the head of the Committee of Local Defence. The plan failed of execution, because Garibaldi declared that his corps was not yet ready for battle.

Meanwhile General von Werder did his utmost to do justice to the multiplex duties he was entrusted with.

He despatched a reinforcement, albeit a small one, to the corps besieging Belfort, and, in order to have greater freedom in his rear, he transferred his line of communications between Vesoul and Gray to the right bank of the Saône.

The Prussian Brigade was charged with the investment of Langres. Advancing in two columns past Thil-Châtel, they encountered the enemy on the 16th at Longeau, south of the fortress. He was repulsed with the loss of two guns, and on the 18th a position north of Langres was secured, from which it was possible to cover the communications in rear of the Second Army, as well as those of the XIVth Corps, from molestation by the powerful garrison. Several battalions of Gardes Mobiles encamped outside the fortress were compelled by this march to beat a retreat with heavy loss. Soon General von der Goltz was convinced that the place would speedily succumb under a bombardment, and accordingly he asked for 30 heavy guns to be



GENERAL V. GLÜMER.

sent there. Meanwhile he drove back right under the walls of the fortress the last bodies of French troops which remained outside the place. Up to the 26th December the brigade remained in its position.

The Baden Division was ordered to advance southward upon Beaune. At first it was intended to continue this forward movement by sending a brigade from Beaune to Seurre, and even a subsequent advance via St. Jean-de-Losne upon Dôle and Arc-et-Senans was contemplated.

BATTLE OF NUIITS, 18TH DECEMBER, 1870.



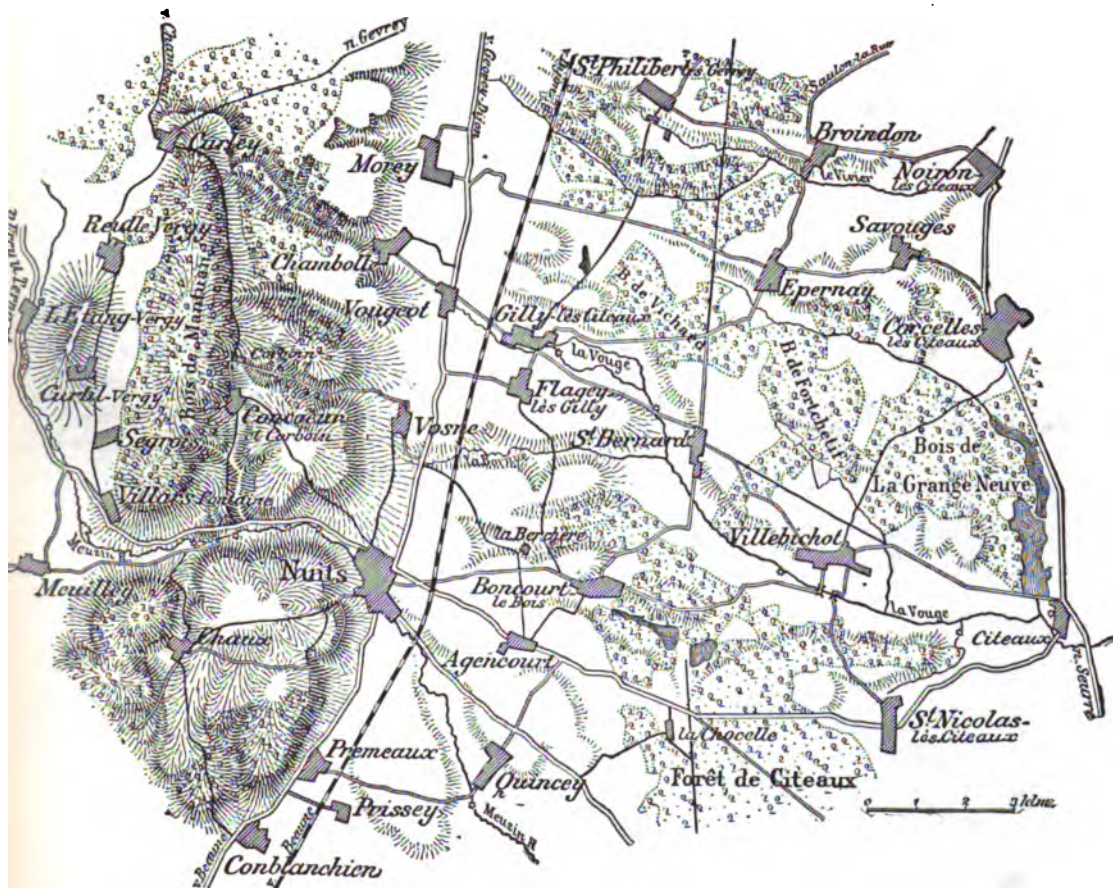
NUIITS.

To carry out this plan General von Glümer started on the 18th of December with the 1st and 2nd Baden Brigades (12 battalions, 7 squadrons and 36 guns), in all about 10,000 men; whilst the 3rd Baden Brigade (5 battalions, 4 squadrons and 18 guns) remained to protect Dijon. The strength and compositions of Crémer's Division posted at Nuits and Beaune was not known with accuracy; it consisted at that time of two brigades, numbering 12,800 men and 20 guns. To the right of Crémer. Péliissier held the passages over the Saône at Verdun and Seurre with Gardes Mobiles, National Guards of the department and Franks-tireurs, and had flying columns moving as far as St. Jean-de-Losne and in the extensive woodlands of Citeaux. The corps of Garibaldi still stood in the mountains near Autun, to the left of Crémer.

Nuits, with the plateau of Chaux rising behind it, forms towards the north and east a strong post well suited for defence, and shut off on the west by rugged slopes and ravines of the mountains. Crémer had resumed possession of the town on the 14th; his outposts in the plain held the line of the woods on the Vouge stream east of Boncourt; before daybreak two battalions and a battery had been sent along the highway toward Dijon as far as Gevrey. The rest of Crémer's troops stood in Beaune.

For the advance of the main body of his troops (8 battalions, 6 squadrons and 5 batteries) General von Glümer had determined to use the road in the plain, passing through Saulon-la-Rue and Boncourt. It appeared necessary to flank this march along the mountains, which was to be done by two small columns under General von

Degenfeld. One of them (2 battalions, $\frac{1}{2}$ squadron and 1 battery) marched from Urcy through Ternant upon Villars-Fontaine; the other (1 battalion) marched from Corcelles, following the ridge of heights through Chamboeuf to Concoeur. Both columns should, as soon as they had reached the brook Meuzin, join in the expected battle at Nuits and endeavour to secure the heights of Chaux. A connecting link between the column marching in the plain and those marching across the mountains



NUITS.

3 km. = 1½ Engl. mile.

was formed by a battalion pursuing the great highway along the foot of the mountains, through Gevrey and Vougeot.

At noon the advanced guard of the main body had to deploy against the enemy at the Vouge stream. In a spirited combat they took Boncourt, and soon after 1 o'clock the farm La Berchère, which had been hotly defended. The left wing occupied Agencourt. The French battle-line could now be discerned; it followed the railway cutting, which afforded excellent cover, from the bridge over the brook Meuzin as far as near Vosne. On the terraces on the declivity of the mountain and on the height behind the town the artillery was perceived; it had a full view of and

entirely commanded the whole field of attack. East of Prémaux stood the enemy's right wing; it was pushed forward in the vineyards towards the Meuzin, and was fairly well protected against being outflanked.

Towards 2 o'clock the main body of the Baden forces had deployed and brought their batteries into play. As yet no effect seemed to have been produced on the enemy at Nuits by the columns approaching along the mountains; from Gevrey only the French detachment had, after a slight resistance, fallen back upon the line Vosne-Concoeur on account of the Germans advancing on both its flanks. Time was pressing on account of the shortness of the winter-day; shortly after 2 o'clock the general



LA BERCHÈRE.

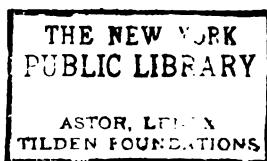
(After a contemporary sketch by W. Emelé.)

infantry attack was commenced from Agencourt and La Berchère. By rushes, but still slowly and with heavy loss, they advanced over the level but sodden ground, intersected as it was by vineyards and wire fences. A distance of 1200 metres (= nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ Engl. mile) up to the railway cutting had to be crossed under the uninterrupted, rapid fire of the extensive front of the French. At last there appeared on the spurs of the mountains the battalions coming up via Vosne and Concoeur, whilst the reserves of the main body, prolonging the right wing, gained the flank of the enemy in the railway cutting. It was four o'clock when the long line of attack rushed, almost simultaneously, into the railway cutting. In many places they fought man to man, at last the enemy fled in disorder and was pursued by a rapid fire with horrible



ASSAULT UPON THE RAILWAY STATION AT NUITS.

{face p. 498.



effect. The houses at the borders of Nuits had for some time been played by the Baden artillery, but now some batteries drew up in close proximity. The railway cutting, which by this time was in their possession, the infantry advanced and storm the town, took it at the first rush and kept it in spite of some counter-attacks of the French. It was 6 o'clock ere the street-fight terminated.

Degenfeld's column, marching upon Villars-Fontaine, had found the steep front of Chaux strongly occupied by the enemy. A frontal attack upon him did not seem promising, and having failed to establish communication across the woody and mountainous country with the columns on his flank, Degenfeld returned at 4 o'clock via Châtillon to Perigny on the highway south of Dijon.

During the night the Baden troops bivouacked in the frost on the hard field and in the market-place of Nuits. It had been a severe struggle and a great loss of life; 940 men, among them many officers, lay dead and wounded on the field. In the midst of his storming regiments Prince William of Baden was severely wounded, and General von Glümer, the Commander of the Division, was also struck by a shell. The French lost about 2000 men, besides 650 prisoners.

Glümer having been wounded, General von Werder, who was present at the battle, assumed the command. It having been ascertained that the enemy had retreated, he led the troops back to Dijon on the 19th. The battle had proved that the Germans were in front of an enemy who was far stronger and better organized than had been suspected. However greatly the result of the battle may have surprised him, yet it seemed no longer advisable to employ the two feeble columns at Dijon in expeditions at any great distance from the place.

The 4th Reserve Division, which was at this time employed to the rear of the main army, covering the communications and observing the country round the Ognon and the Doubs, had only had some slight collisions with troops ranging from Besançon and as far as Autoreille and Pesmes. A flying column despatched between the 20th and 27th into the Côte d'Or towards Montbard—Semur also encountered only small detachments of tireurs, who speedily retreated.

Since the battle of the 18th the south of Dijon remained quiet, but on reports came in that troops were being assembled at Lyon and along the railway thither. Some professed to have witnessed the northward march of columns of all arms; and shortly afterwards it was believed that new regiments had arrived in the neighbourhood of Dôle. The French being masters of the line from Lyon—Lons-le-Saunier—Besançon—Isle-sur-Doubs, these reports appeared of great importance with regard to the protection of the army besieging Belfort, especially as they soon gained consistence and announced the approach of reinforcements to relieve the fortress. On the 23rd the Great Head Quarters received from Bern that the Besançon railway had been engaged for three days with German transports, and also received from Orleans reports—not confirmed, however, by German outposts—that French carriers told of military transports by rail from Orleans to the Saône; accordingly General von Zastrow, stationed at Auxerre, was instructed on the 25th, again to move to the south-eastern theatre of war, where he was threatened, in order if necessary to support the XIVth Army Corps, and then to return with it to assume the offensive. Early on the 26th Werder was informed that the French had evacuated the south of Dijon, and when in the afternoon General von Tresckow announced from Belfort

detachments of the enemy had arrived at Rougemont and Isle-sur-Doubs, Werder resolved to evacuate Dijon and to concentrate his corps round Vesoul. General von Moltke approved of this measure, and his telegram which arrived early on the 27th also announced the departure of General von Debschitz with eight battalions, three squadrons and two batteries from Strassburg for Belfort.

On the 27th the XIVth Corps on all sides began the movements towards its new positions at Vesoul. The 4th Reserve Division had already concentrated by the 28th; it then marched into the neighbourhood of Montbozon and Villersexel, and on the 30th it pushed its advanced guard forward across the Ognon to Rougemont. The Baden Division marched through Dampierre-sur-Salon, crossed the Saône at Soing and occupied the places south of Vesoul. Degenfeld's Brigade marched a distance of 65 miles in two days on hard frozen, slippery roads and with scanty supply of provisions. Keller's Brigade was provisionally left at Gray. The Prussian Brigade came up by forced marches from Langres by way of Combeaufontaine, and occupied the country east of Vesoul and Lure. With Belfort communication was established by Arcey, where a detachment of the besieging army had already taken up a position.

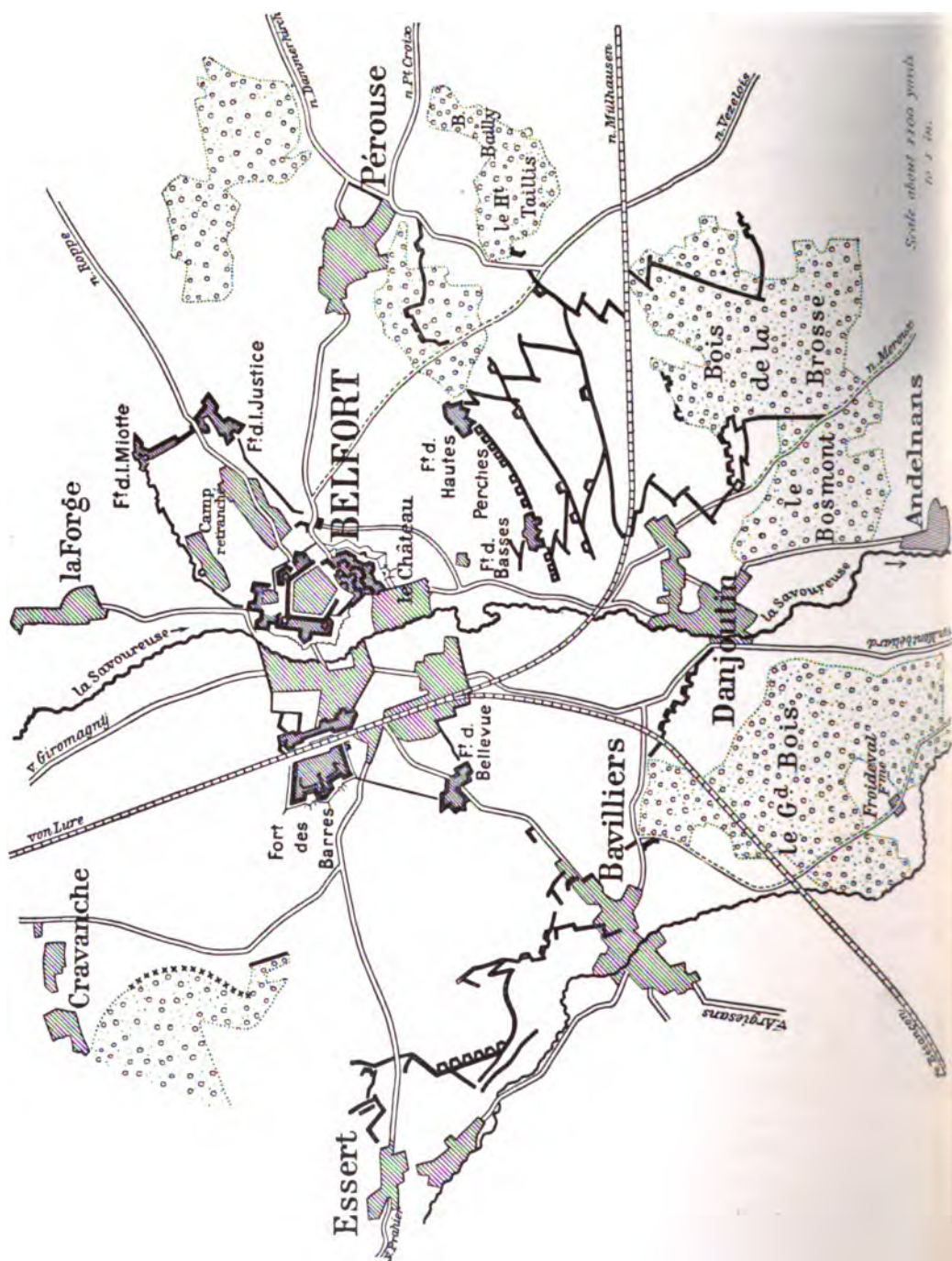
Reconnaissances pushed forward towards the Doubs found that the enemy had occupied the villages north of Baume-les-Dames as well as Isle-sur-Doubs, but the bridges over the Ognon were destroyed and those over the Doubs blown up, which seemed to show that the enemy did not contemplate taking the offensive. The persistent reports that a powerful army of relief was already marching upon Belfort and had passed Besançon were in no way confirmed; of course all that went on on the other side of the Doubs was hidden from us. Meanwhile General von Zastrow had marched through Chablis and Noyers, and on the 30th of December reached the line Montbard—Aisy—Nuits-sur-Armançon, with twelve battalions, ten squadrons and seven batteries. At that spot orders arrived from Moltke, to halt for a time as nothing definite was yet known about the movements of Bourbaki's army coming from the Loire, it being in fact suspected that he still stood at Bourges and Nevers. At the Head-Quarters at Vesoul a French deserter was examined on that day, and the precise information he gave placed it beyond all doubt that numerous regiments from southern France had arrived at Besançon, and universal report estimated their numbers at 60,000. To the south of Gray cavalry had made its appearance, which clearly formed part of a new army. As reports about the approach of great forces of the enemy kept on increasing, Keller was on the 1st of January ordered to come nearer to Vesoul, so as to reconnoitre from Neuville-les-la-Charité in the direction of the Ognon.

As a matter of fact Bourbaki had, on the 29th of December, arrived at Chagny and Châlon-sur-Saône with his XVIIIth and XXth Corps, and the XXIVth Corps newly formed at Lyon was on the way thence, travelling by train to Besançon.

THE SIEGE OF BELFORT TO THE BEGINNING OF JANUARY.

The first siege-guns and companies of garrison artillery arrived before Belfort after the fall of Neubreisach, so that the preparations for the formal siege ordered by the Great Head-Quarters could be taken in hand in the latter half of the month of November. General von Mertens and Lieutenant-Colonel von Schelihe assumed the direction of the works of attack. The fortress was well armed, had a strong garrison

the besieging forces was so scanty that it was barely possible to form a connected line of investment;—considerable forces also were required to secure the communi-



cations and afford protection against Besançon and the valley of the Doubs, whence perpetual attempts were made to interfere with the siege. The park of siege-



increased but slowly, Under the pressure of these adverse circumstances General von Tresckow desired first to try the effect of a bombardment of the place from the west, from the heights of Essert and Bavilliers, which were favourably situated for that purpose, although it was unanimously agreed that the formal attack would have to be delivered from the Perches in the south, against the citadel.



In face of a vigorous resistance on the part of the garrison the line of investment was drawn more closely in, and during the night of the 2nd of December, in a severe frost seven heavy batteries

BRINGING UP ENTRENCHING MATERIALS.

were constructed on the said heights. This was followed up by the construction of more batteries in front of Bavilliers and near Andelnans, still a bombardment of several days' duration led to no perceptible result. The town was certainly set on fire in several places, but it was impossible to silence the artillery of the besieged, and their sorties continued with unabated strength; the fortress was in fact well prepared for the contest.

General von Tresckow saw that this was not the way to obtain the desired result, but with his inadequate means the prospect of commencing the actual siege seemed as yet remote. He resolved therefore to persevere with the artillery contest, but the additional batteries to be constructed as reinforcement, were to be so placed that they should be able later on to aid in the formal attack to be delivered from the south.

Towards the end of the year reinforcements arrived from the 4th Reserve Division and the Alsace command, so that the strength of the besieging forces now amounted to 30 battalions, 7 squadrons, 6 batteries with 18 companies of garrison artillery, and 6 companies of pioneers. This force would have been fully adequate to carry out the attack effectively, but a new difficulty of a different kind presented itself—the advance of a field army threatening to relieve the fortress. In the last days of December reports kept coming in of hostile movements of troops in the valleys of the Doubs and the Ognon, directed against Belfort. General von Tresckow had to take these

reports into account, determined as he was to oppose every interference with his siege operations. General von Debschitz' force, consisting of eight battalions, two squadrons and two batteries, arrived between the 28th and 30th December, and was despatched to Delle to cover the line extending from Croix by the Swiss frontier to Exincourt on the Rhine and Rhone canal, and to place outposts by the River Gland and at Audincourt on the Upper Doubs. Seven more battalions, $2\frac{1}{4}$ squadrons and $2\frac{1}{2}$ batteries, under Colonel von Bredow, were posted on the line behind the Allaine, from Sochaux to Montbéliard, and thence by Allondans to Arcey, having outposts from the Doubs, near Bart, to Onans, south of Arcey. From there the connection was extended to the left wing of the XIVth Army Corps at Villersexel—Rougemont. On the western side of the line of investment itself, three battalions were kept in constant readiness to support the post in Arcey in case of need. It is seen then that more than half of the available forces were engaged in warding off any attempt to relieve the fortress.

Nevertheless the siege operations were continued, and on the 26th of December it was finally determined to conduct them from the south against the Perches, and thence against the citadel. By the 9th of January there were formed three great groups of batteries for the artillery attack: three batteries still in the first position at Essert, five batteries at Bavilliers, and six batteries in the woods south of the Perches, while two separate batteries added their support from near Andelnans in the south, and near Chevremont in the east respectively. The 50 guns playing from these several positions soon established their superiority over the fire of the fortress. An advance, however, against the front of the Perches was as yet prevented by the intrenched and strongly occupied village of Danjoutin. It was captured in the night between the 7th and 8th of January, by seven Landwehr companies under Captain von Manstein, by a coup-de-main executed with equal skill and gallantry. The victors took 20 officers and 700 rank and file prisoners.

The sudden capture of this important outwork was the first severe blow inflicted on the fortress; the superiority established by the besiegers' artillery also affected the defenders, whilst the increase of infectious diseases sorely tried the inhabitants. The Commandant alone had lost none of his energy.

OPERATIONS OF THE XIVTH ARMY CORPS TO PROTECT THE SIEGE OF BELFORT AND UPPER ALSACE.

As the year 1870 drew to a close the Commanders of the German army became cognisant of the fact that the power of resistance in Paris was nearly exhausted. It might therefore be anticipated that the French rulers would shrink from no measures in order by a supreme effort to save the capital. It seemed most natural for both the armies of the Loire to advance simultaneously. It was impossible, however, to obtain reliable information, and the best means of counteracting such a movement was for the Germans to resume offensive operations. These were first directed against General Chanzy, who threatened the German positions round the Capital from close proximity. To meet any action of Bourbaki's, who was supposed to be at Bourges, there were available the IIInd Army Corps, which was on the march from Paris to Montargis, and the 13th Division of the VIIth Army Corps posted on the Armançon.

In connection with these resolves General von Werder received, on the 1st of January, orders from Versailles to consider, in view of the enemy's inactivity at Besançon, the advisability of resuming offensive action towards the west and south-west, which might lead to the re-occupation of Dijon and to the investment of Langres.

But at the head-quarters at Vesoul things wore a different aspect. The assembly of very large forces of the enemy beyond the Doubs could no longer be doubted, notwithstanding that in some details the reports were contradictory, and did not enable a definite conclusion to be formed with respect to the intentions of the enemy. On one point, however, all reports agreed, viz., that the first object of the French commanders was the relief of Belfort. Again it was reported that the railway line Lyon—Besançon, which had been reserved since the 22nd of December for military transport, was to be engaged at that work up to the 3rd of January. For the progress of the siege of Belfort, protection against the hostile forces assembling on the Doubs was thus in any case indispensable, and a march to the south-west could not be thought of before the state of affairs in the valley of the Doubs was fully known.

On the 2nd and 3rd of January it seemed from reports that arrived, that the French were at last seriously thinking of advancing against Belfort; large masses, according to the reports, were advancing upon Rougemont. General von der Goltz therefore occupied Esprels and the passages of the Ognon to the south of it, whilst on the 4th the whole XIVth Army Corps was concentrated east of Vesoul. But no enemy made his appearance at Rougemont, and the cavalry reconnoitring on a broad front could discover no forward movement of the enemy. General von Werder had therefore already determined to make a forward movement himself upon the Doubs, when on the 5th of January, strong columns of the enemy made their appearance in front of the XIVth Army Corps, south of Vesoul, on the roads from Dôle and Besançon. They were Bourbaki's advanced guards.

Originally it had been planned to move the First Army of the Loire under General Bourbaki by way of Montargis upon Paris; but when the execution of this project was delayed and the prospect of coöperating with Chanzy had disappeared, the French Commander-in-Chief determined on the 19th of December to transfer Bourbaki's army to the south-eastern theatre of war in the valley of the Saône. According to the plan formed by Freycinet the XVth Corps was to remain in intrenched positions at Vierzon and Nevers, to protect Bourges and hide from the Germans the movements of the troops, whilst the XVIIIth and XXth Corps should travel by train to Chagny and Châlons-sur-Saône and occupy Dijon, Gray and Vesoul jointly with Garibaldi and Crémier. At the same time the XXIVth Corps, newly formed at Lyon, was to be moved to Besançon, to reinforce the troops already assembled there. They hoped thus to take General von Werder by surprise and easily defeat his widely dispersed forces. The French thought that the mere advance of so great an army must compel the Germans to raise the siege of Belfort and to cease their attacks upon the northern fortresses, and in any case interrupt all the lines of communication in rear of the German armies. Indeed a subsequent coöperation with General Faidherbe did not seem very unlikely. General Bourbaki, who was appointed Commander-in-Chief of this new Army of the East, demanded to be further reinforced by the XVth Corps,

whereby his forces would be raised to between 140,000 and 150,000 men. He hoped by the number of his troops to make up for their inferior quality.

The success of the enterprise seemed to depend on rapidity. The movement was entered upon on the 23rd of December, but all preparations were defective and bore the mark of too great haste, and even in the matter of the transport of the troops so many mistakes were made that the detrainment of the XVIIIth and XXth Corps was not accomplished in Chagny and Châlons-sur-Saône before the 29th of December. When the evacuation of Dijon became known, the troops were once more entrained, to move them, notwithstanding the shortness of the journey, by the Auxonne and Dôle railway, nearer to Besançon, and this entailed a further loss of time. The XXIVth Corps, far from efficient even at the end of December, lost much time over the railway journey, so that the Army of the East was not drawn up between Dijon and Besançon before the commencement of the New-Year.



GENERAL BOURBAKI.

About this time—January 4th—also began the transport of the XVth Army Corps, which had been granted supplementarily. This was carried out much more unsatisfactorily still, because Clerval on the Upper Doubs, which had been selected as the place of detrainment, was very unsuitable, and the railway stations were so blocked by the provision trains of the commissariat, that the movement was entirely arrested for days at a time. Not till the 16th of January did the last units join their corps, when it was already involved in the conflict.

On the 2nd of January the XVIIIth Corps was near Auxonne—Dôle, the XXth at Dampierre on the Doubs, and the heads of both on the Ognon, between Pesmes and Marnay; the XXIVth Corps, and an army-

reserve of picked regiments was at Besançon. Crémier's Division had been occupying Dijon since the 29th; it was charged, jointly with Garibaldi, with covering the left flank of the army. When Garibaldi at last advanced from Autun to Dijon, Crémier was ordered to Gray on the Saône, where he remained till the 11th.

On the 3rd of Jan. the XVIIIth Corps was set in motion by the road Pesmes—Vesoul, upon Bonboillon; the XXth Corps, which did not cross the Ognon at Marnay, marched upon Etuz—Voray, in order to gain the road Besançon—Rioz—Vesoul; the XXIVth Corps moved via Marcheaux upon Montbozon and Rougemont. The weather was exceedingly unfavourable; deep snow covered the fields, the roads were frozen hard and smooth as mirrors, and winter fogs shrouded the distant views. It was intended that on the 5th the vanguard should reach the line Mailley—Echenoz-le-Sec—Filain—Esprels, and that the XVth Corps, if its railway journey were completed in time, should, from the valley of the Doubs, either threaten Montbéliard or join the main army. In case Werder should remain at Vesoul, he was to be attacked there on the 6th.

But the French commanders did not clearly understand the ultimate aim of this great and sudden diversion towards the east. The timely evacuation by Werder of the Burgundian capital had thwarted their immediate aim. The loudly proclaimed intended relief of Belfort, which it was hoped would be accomplished without striking a blow, required an energetic advance eastward; for contrary to expectation, the Germans here were not to be intimidated. On the other hand, the situation of Paris, which at that time was already more critical than that of Belfort, and the desirability of co-operation with the other French field armies called for action directed towards the north-west by Langres—Chaumont; and, above all, the destructive effect of an interruption of the lines of communication of the Germans was loudly represented on all sides, and pressed for action towards the north, towards Lorraine.

When the army was already on the point of being put in array before Vesoul the commanders were still undecided about the ultimate aim of the movement. General Bourbaki, moreover, lacked confidence in his troops; the retardation of the XVth Corps thwarted him in his plans, and lastly he was afraid that the Germans would, without a contest, escape in the direction of Belfort. In spite of his great superiority he shrunk at the last moment from making an immediate attack upon his enemy, who was waiting for him at Vesoul; he preferred to manœuvre, to outflank the left of the XIVth Corps, and to force it away from Belfort.

These measures were already initiated when the advanced troops of the Germans discovered on the 5th of January the French camps at Rioz. This led in the course of the day to a series of conflicts south of Vesoul, at Levrecey, Vellefaux, and Echenoz-le-Sec; in these the Germans made 500 prisoners of many different regiments, proving the presence before them of both the corps of Bourbaki, and confirming the junction of the XXIVth Corps with the main army.

Now the situation could no longer be misunderstood even at the Great Headquarters, and a counter-measure was taken without delay; viz., the formation of a new army, the Army of the South. The following forces were available for that purpose: The IInd Army Corps under General von Fransecky, which had, on the 5th of January, arrived at Montargis from Paris; then General von Zastrow of the VIIth Army Corps, with his 13th Division, which, as is well known, had during the latter days of uncertainty been moving to and fro between the Upper Seine and Yonne, and was now posted at Auxerre, having left one brigade (Von Dannenberg) to protect the railway at Montbard; finally the 14th Division of Infantry, which was set free by the fall of Mézières, and was being brought up by train. Both Army Corps were ordered to set out immediately and to unite in the neighbourhood of Nuits on the Armançon and Châtillon-sur-Seine. These troops, to which during the subsequent operations the XIVth Army Corps was joined, were put under the command of General von Manteuffel. It was not possible to send immediate reinforcements to General von Werder, and he had meanwhile to rely on such forces as he had.

On the 6th of January the XIVth Army Corps stood drawn up in a position north of Vesoul awaiting Bourbaki's attack, but it was not made. On the 7th it was observed that the enemy had withdrawn his left wing and had moved his forces somewhat to the right. The immediate advance upon Vesoul seemed to have been abandoned, but as yet no enemy had entered Villersexel, L'Isle-sur-Doubs was still in the hands of Tresckow's covering troops, and no hostile movement was to be observed in front of Blamont.

General von Werder knew that his experienced forces were far superior in mobility to those of the French, defectively equipped and ill disciplined as they were, and that he would have ample time to bar the road to Belfort in case they should attempt to execute this movement, which would entail on them a change of front. All that had to be done was carefully to watch the roads on the right bank of the Doubs leading to Belfort; this duty was intrusted to two regiments of cavalry. Reports coming in during the night of the 8th left no doubt about the flank movement of the French; the roads south of Vesoul were open, and French advanced troops had appeared in Villersexel and at St. Ferjeux; now it was the question of being beforehand with the enemy, or, in the last resort, of falling upon the flank of his marching columns, breaking their ranks, and arresting their advance, then promptly moving behind the Lisaine, where it had been determined to accept a decisive engagement. Orders were issued that very night, and the troops were alarmed. The Baden Division was set in motion to march via Vy-les-Lure to Athesans; the 4th Reserve Division to Aillevans, its advanced guard to Villersexel; Goltz's Brigade to Noroy-le-Bourg, and its cavalry to Vallerois-le-Bois. At Aillevans military bridges were to be thrown across the Ognon, to establish rapid communication with the country south of Athesans. Meanwhile there were left behind at Vesoul two Baden outpost battalions and the greater part of the troops of the line of communication; a small post at Port-sur-Saône reconnoitred towards the south-west. At 4 o'clock in the morning the movements began during a heavy fall of snow.

As a matter of fact, Bourbaki had had need of the time between the 5th and 9th of January to move his army, originally resting with its right wing on Montbozon—Esprels, so far round to the right, that it now directed its left wing in the Valley of the Ognon upon Esprels—Villersexel. The defective mobility of the young troops, the want of army-service trains, the complete dependence for provisions on the railway line at the bottom of the deep valley of the Doubs, whence the transport columns could only with endless toil and loss of time on the steep and slippery roads reach the army operating on the heights, added to the unfavourable and deeply snow-covered road system—sufficiently explain the slowness of his movements. As early as the 6th of January Bourbaki had transferred his Headquarters from Besançon to Montbozon, and had reported to Gambetta that he expected the first collision to take place at Villersexel. It is thus seen that the French Army of the East had not been directing its march upon Belfort, as was supposed, with the German XIVth Army Corps, but

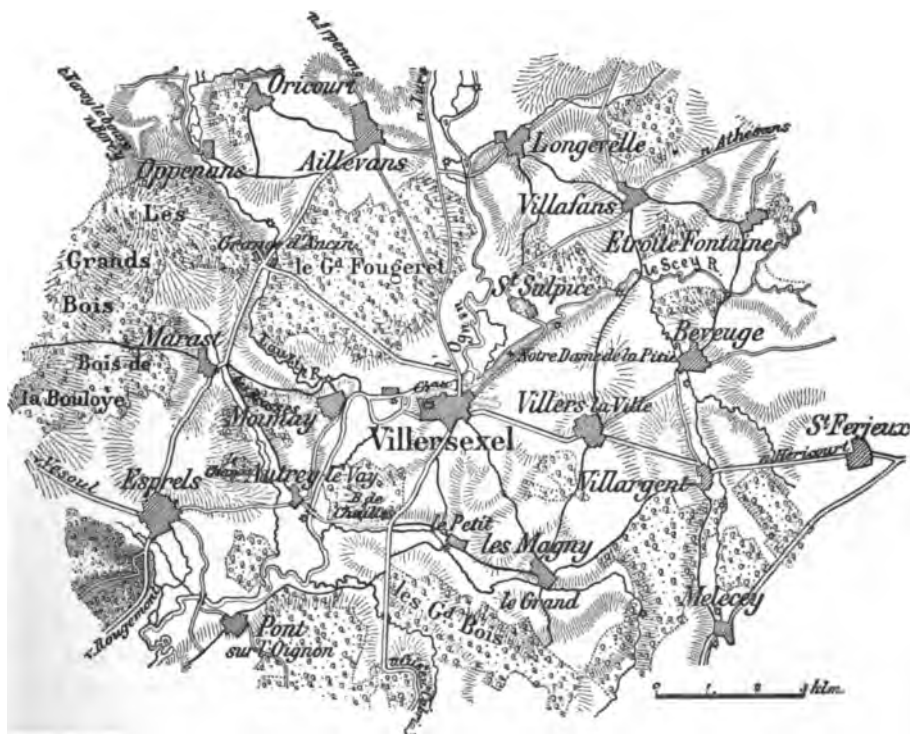


MARCH TO THE LISAINE.

was preparing to attack it at Villersexel, so as to outflank it, and force its left wing away from the Lisaine. The following were the marching orders of the French columns for the 8th and the 9th. On the left wing the XVIIIth Corps was to march from Montbozon to Esprels—Autrey-le-Vay; to their right the XXth Corps from Rougemont via Cubrial to Villers-la-Ville—Villargent; then the XXIVth Corps from Cuse to St. Ferjeux—Vellechevreux. Those parts of the XVth Corps which had already been detained at Clerval were to take the road from Fontaine to Arcey and march to Onans. The army reserve and the reserve cavalry were on the 9th to be drawn up in rear of the XXIVth Corps. On the evening of the 8th the vanguard of the 3rd Division of the XXth Corps occupied Villersexel and the passage over the Ognon at that place.

BATTLE OF VILLERSEXEL ON THE 9th OF JANUARY.

On the 9th of January at about 9 o'clock the advanced guard of the 4th Reserve Division (25th Regiment with two batteries) coming from Borey, issued from the wood of Grand Fougeret. Beyond the Ognon from the side of Cubrial they descried a



VILLERSEXEL.

3 km. = 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ Engl. mile.

column of the enemy marching upon Villersexel, which was situated on a steep slope on the opposite southern bank of the river, overlooked at its western edge by a large château surrounded with park and walls. Between the wood and the Ognon

extended an exposed level space; the only passage over the river was a massive bridge strongly barricaded, and the neighbouring localities, park and château were held by troops. The batteries of the advanced guard had quickly opened fire on the enemy's marching columns, and the French infantry endeavoured to disturb this action by long-range fire. A frontal attack upon Villersexel presenting difficulties, the Prussian infantry moved round so as to outflank the left wing of the enemy; discovering a footbridge over the river, which was feebly defended, they penetrated the park of the château. This favoured the advance also on other points, and having been reinforced by one more battalion, by about one o'clock the advanced guard made itself master of the town, taking several hundred prisoners.

Meanwhile Goltz's detachment had also arrived from Noroy-le-Bourg near Grange d'Ancin; it was to cover the right flank on the line Marat—Moimay, and in case of need support the troops at Villersexel. The 4th Reserve Division, having reached Aillevans, had constructed a bridge south of Longeville, and advanced towards St. Sulpice. At noon the sun shone out. General von Werder was on the spot; from the height south of Aillevans a view was obtained far over the country south of Villersexel. On all the roads leading to the Ognon, from Pont-sur-l'Ognon as far as St. Ferjeux, the heads of the approaching French columns were seen. Werder understood it all; not the flank, the front of the enemy was confronting him. Those portions of his corps which were hurrying forward to the Lisaine accordingly received counter-orders; the main body of the Baden Division was to march via Arpenans to Aillevans, and the 1st Baden Brigade was to halt at Lure.

But whilst the enemy was still slowly deploying at a considerable distance south of Villersexel and bringing forward his artillery, there arose a more pressing danger at the right flank, where the leading Division of the XVIIIth French Corps with the reserve artillery was pushing forward from Esprels and Autrey-le-Vay. The greater part of the 30th Regiment of Goltz's detachment having been pushed forward to occupy the château and park of Villersexel, it was practically only the 34th Regiment and the batteries which held Moimay and the adjoining wood in front of it. Speedily a vigorous contest ensued. When towards 2 o'clock the fire of the French guns also increased in front of Villersexel, the main body of the 4th Reserve Division was brought up from Aillevans.

Soon after 4 o'clock the companies of the 34th Regiment that had advanced into the wood west of the River Lauzin, had to be withdrawn across the river, so as to be able, in face of the great superiority of the enemy's forces, to retain at any rate Moimay, which was of importance for securing communication with the troops fighting south of the Ognon. The Prussian batteries were in a critical position. The attempt to take Marast, which was in the hands of the French, failed, but, on the other hand, their attempts upon Moimay were equally unsuccessful. Gradually the contest slackened, and when shortly before dusk the Baden Division, which had been directed upon Marast, arrived and deployed its artillery, the enemy withdrew under cover of his batteries. The 30th Regiment also had been called up again from Villersexel to Moimay, but had no opportunity to join in the contest.

During the progress of the contest General von Werder had been carefully watching the heavy masses deployed by the enemy. To make an offensive movement beyond the Ognon was no longer advisable; all that could be done was to prevent

the French from crossing the river, which afforded some protection on the march forward to the Lisaine. The infantry that had already advanced beyond Villersexel towards Villers-la-Ville was recalled, and the artillery was withdrawn to the right bank. The main body of the 4th Reserve Division stood ready to receive them, and to cover the left flank a Baden detachment held Nôtre-Dame-de-la-Pitié and St. Sulpice on the River Scey.

But meanwhile, after the recall of the 30th Regiment, some French infantry from the western part of Villersexel had, under cover of the night, penetrated into the park and château, ere the Germans had re-occupied them, and some more regiments were advancing from the south upon the town, which was also vigorously cannonaded by the French artillery.

The position of the fight not rendering a permanent



STREET-ENGAGEMENT IN VILLERSEXEL.

retention of Villersexel necessary, the General of Brigade commanding in the town ordered its evacuation. Hotly pursued by the enemy and making repeated counter-attacks, the Prussian troops were executing this difficult movement, when orders arrived from General von Werder for the town to be held. Forthwith $3\frac{1}{2}$ battalions of Landwehr, as well as the 25th Regiment, which, as rearguard, was still on the field, once more advanced. A contest, lit up by the burning houses, now ensued in the spacious château, in the park, and in the streets; this struggle, full of vicissitudes and alternating successes, and continuously fed by the French, lasted till one o'clock in the morning, reduced the castle to ashes and entailed heavy losses. Evacuation ordered once more, was slowly carried out.

It was 3 o'clock in the morning when the Reserve Division, crossing over the bridge at Aillelans, went into bivouac at Longeville and Villafans—a part of the XIVth Corps remained under arms all through that bitterly cold night; the rest were encamped round Aillelans, Oricourt, and Arpenans. The 15,000 Germans engaged in that battle lost 533 rank and file and 26 officers, mostly Landwehr men of the 4th Reserve Division. The French lost about the same number, but left in addition 700 prisoners in the hands of the Germans. Of the XXIVth French Corps marching on the right wing, only a few battalions had taken part in the engagement; an outflanking movement was not so much as attempted. On the other hand, the leading Division had continued its march on the road to Héricourt, and, like the head of the XVth Corps pushed forward by way of Onans, it had in the afternoon gained touch with the advanced troops of the besieging forces posted under Colonel von Bredow along the line Saulnot—Arcey.

On the 10th of January at daybreak Werder's Corps stood assembled at Oricourt—Aillelans—Villafans, ready to resume the contest, in case the enemy should advance via Villersexel. But the early hours passed without disturbance; a dense fog resting over the valley of the Ognon shut out every prospect.

MARCH OF THE XIVTH ARMY CORPS BEHIND THE LISAINÉ.

General von Werder accordingly did not delay, but moved off at 9 o'clock in short columns of march; the enemy did not follow, and even lost touch. By the roads through Ronchamp and Béverne the Lisaine was reached on the 11th. In the afternoon the Baden Division on the right was at Frahier and Chalonvillars; Goltz's detachment was in the centre, between Chagey and Couthenans, and Schmeling's Division on the left was at Héricourt and Tavey. Of the besieging forces, Colonel von Bredow still stood at Arcey, and the detachment of Von Debschitz was south of the Allaine, near Delle. The right wing, bent forward as far as Lure, was held by Colonel von Willisen with the troops called up from Vesoul and with a strong force of cavalry (8 companies, 13 squadrons and 2 batteries). He was charged with the duty of observing towards the west and the north. The Germans had succeeded in getting between the enemy and Belfort.

On the 10th Bourbaki had halted at Villersexel, in the expectation that Werder would attack him so as to open the nearest road to Héricourt. Only the leading divisions of the XXIVth and XVth Army Corps of the French made some movements against the advanced troops of the besieging forces at Saulnot—Arcey—Montbéliard.

Crémer's Division had been sent from Gray to Vesoul, where it arrived on the 13th, thus leaving the protection of the Eastern Army against the threatening concentration of the German Southern Army on the Upper Seine entirely to Garibaldi in Dijon. We shall soon see how thoroughly Garibaldi misconceived the nature of the task thus set him.

On the 11th the Eastern Army began to execute a change of front against the Lisaine, and over this manœuvre again were spent the valuable days up to the 15th, days which the German opponent fully utilized. Altogether the French Headquarters had many causes of anxiety. In consequence of their very inefficient reconnaissances Arcey was believed to be strongly intrenched and occupied; the capture of this place they considered to be of utmost importance, but thought it necessary for this to wait for the arrival of the whole of the XVth Corps. Crémer also was unable to join on to the left wing before the 15th. To remove to any distance from the railway line in the valley of the Doubs seemed unadvisable in consideration of provisioning the troops and of receiving reinforcements. These things too, no doubt, contributed to the slowness of the deployment of the army before the valley of the Lisaine.

On the 13th Bourbaki resolved to advance upon Arcey, which he believed to be the key of the position. He sent forward three corps to make this attack, and from fear lest Werder should fall upon his left flank he retained the XVIIIth Corps in the valley of the Ognon. The thin lines of the German advanced troops resisted the enemy at Chavanne, Aibre, Arcey, and Ste. Marie; they compelled him to deploy, and in the afternoon withdrew behind the Lisaine to Tavey and Couthenans. Another day was thus spent to no good purpose, and the 14th also passed by without any serious conflict. On a front of about 6 miles, extending from the Doubs through Ste. Marie, Arcey up to Aibre—Le Vernoy, the XVth, XXIVth, and XXth Corps stood closely concentrated, and were facing the left wing and centre of the Germans from Montbéliard to Héricourt. But further to the north the XVIIIth Corps, up to now held back, had been unable to join the line, its head had not reached beyond Lomont, and the rear was still at Moffans. Crémer's Division also did not reach Lure before the evening, and that after a forced march from Vesoul. But with these very troops Bourbaki intended to outflank the German right, which he believed to be resting on Mont-Vaudois, and he hoped thus to facilitate his advance upon the strong front Luze—Héricourt—Montbéliard. Accordingly he put off his attack till the 15th.

The Germans were well prepared to meet this attack.

The position selected for the battle was behind the Lisaine and the Allaine. The former brook, in itself unimportant, flows near Frahier through open meadows, enters a woody glen south of Chenebier, extending as far as Chagey, but issues again at Luze—Héricourt into an open plain fully commanded by the rocky Mont-Vaudois; at Bussurel it is once more contracted by projecting mountain spurs, and finally joins the Allaine at Montbéliard, the extreme point of the main position. Between Bussurel and Montbéliard the valley, about 1000 yards in width, is hemmed in on both sides by flat-topped and in places wooded declivities. The French found that for their forward movement there were available only two good roads conveniently situated with regard to their array; these led to Montbéliard and Héricourt. All the other roads were narrow and in places hollow descents, frozen hard, slippery

and covered with deep snow; on the other hand the brook was covered with a crust of ice. Extensive woodlands with rich underwood covered the ground to the west of the Lisaine, and rendered difficult the movement and deployment of large masses and of powerful artillery. The right wing of the Germans extending from Chagey to Frahier was without natural defences, but Héricourt, on the contrary, and the section near Montbéliard, with its castle in front fortified and protected from assault, were well capable of being defended; finally, the broad watercourse of the Allaine, with the Rhine-Rhone canal, being difficult to cross, formed a strong *point d'appui* for the southern flank.

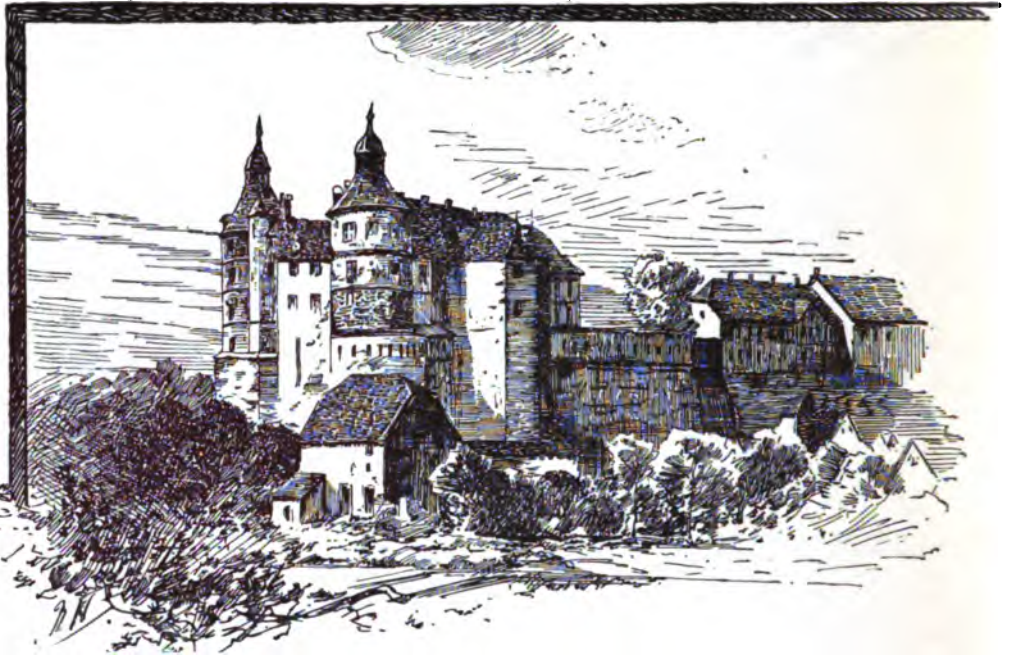
General von Tresckow had already reconnoitred and skilfully strengthened the most important points of this position. Now the prepared defences were armed with heavy guns, viz., the Mont Vaudois near Héricourt, the heights of Grange-Dame near Montbéliard, and the edges of the valley of the Allaine from Sochaux as far as Delle. The respite latterly granted by the enemy was used to dig more shelter-trenches, to strengthen the enceintes of the places, to improve the roads, to lay down lines of telegraph and of relays, and to form dépôts of ammunition and provisions. Hastening in advance, General von Werder and the chief of his Staff, Lieutenant-Colonel von Leszczynski, had personally reconnoitred the whole position and arranged the details. The large extent of the line gave cause for anxiety; the distance from Frahier to Montbéliard was nearly $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles as the crow flies, and from there to the frontiers of Switzerland 8 miles more. For the defence of this line there were available only 48 battalions, 30 squadrons, 142 field-guns and 34 guns of position; in all about 42,000 men, half of whom were Landwehr. It was an advantage that the only line of communication of the French Army, viz., the railway to Montbéliard in the valley of the Doubs, led to a flank, and that opposite the strongest part of the position, and that the complete dependence of the army upon that line drew the bulk of it in the same direction.

On the morning of the 14th the XIVth Army Corps stood drawn up prepared for battle. The thermometer stood at 0° F. ($= 32^{\circ}$ of frost); in consequence the River Lisaine, which had formed an obstacle in front of their position, was frozen hard and passable. News had come in that General von Manteuffel had started from Châtillon-sur-Seine, thus he was still nearly 100 miles away. On the other hand Colonel von Willisen announced in the afternoon the arrival of fresh troops of the enemy at Lure, in front of the most vulnerable part of the line of defence; and finally there was at our rear the fortress with a strong garrison commanded by an officer who had so far proved very energetic. The responsibility had become very great, the existence of the whole corps being imperilled.

Under these impressions General von Werder thought it his duty to report the situation by telegraph to the Head-Quarters at Versailles, and to enquire whether the covering of the army besieging Belfort should be



LANDWEHR.



THE CASTLE OF MONTBÉLIARD.

persisted in. At the Great Head-Quarters, however, the opinion was entertained that if a retrograde movement of the XIVth Army Corps were once begun, it would be difficult to foresee where and when it would be arrested, and that such a retreat would also render difficult and retard the attainment of any satisfactory result by General von Manteuffel, who was advancing by forced marches. Accordingly at 3 p.m. on the 15th of January a definite order was sent to General von Werder to accept battle. Before the arrival of this telegram, however, General von Werder had on his own initiative made the resolve. The first day of battle was already over; the venture could be continued with confidence and the General had the assent of the Royal Commander-in-Chief.

THE BATTLE ON THE LISAINE.

On the evening of the 14th the bivouac fires of the French Army gleamed all along the heights in front of the Lisaine. Every man in the German battle-array felt the importance of the coming day, and a firm resolve filled the breast of every one from the Commander-in-Chief down to the meanest combatant. With arms in hand and foot firmly planted they awaited the onset of the enemy, who was three times as numerous as themselves.

The following was the array of the German troops:

IN FRONT OF THE RIGHT WING, at Ronchamp and Champagney, Colonel von Willisen with 3 regiments of cavalry, 2 companies and 1 battery; this detachment kept in communication with Chenebier. AT CHENEBIER—ETOBON, forming the right

wing, General von Degenfeld with 2 battalions, 1 squadron, 1 battery. To the rear, at FRAHIER, 1 battalion of Landwehr, 1 squadron and 1 battery stood in readiness. At CHAGEY—LUZE and on the north-western slope of Mont-Vaudois, General von der Goltz with 7 battalions, 4 squadrons and 5 batteries; his left wing leaning upon the churchyard of Héricourt. At HÉRICOURT, in the centre of the line of battle, Von Knappe's combined brigade of the 4th Reserve Division (7 battalions, 2 squadrons, 4 batteries), with the left wing resting on Mont-Dannin; west of the Lisaine the wooded knoll of the "Mougnot" was prepared and occupied as a *point d'appui*; outposts at Tavey. IN THE LINE BUSSUREL—BETHONCOURT—MONTBELIARD, its right resting on Mont-Dannin, was Von Zimmermann's Brigade of East Prussian Landwehr of the 4th Reserve Division (8 battalions, 2 squadrons, 2 batteries); outposts at Ste. Suzanne—Mont-Chevis-Ferme. SOUTH OF THE ALLAINE, between Exincourt and Croix, near the frontier of



BETHONCOURT (VIEW TOWARDS HÉRICOURT).
(From a contemporary sketch by W. Emelé.)

Switzerland, General von Debschitz with 8 battalions, 2 squadrons and 3 batteries. IN THE SECOND LINE AT GRAND-CHARMONT stood prepared to support the troops engaged on the Lisaine and the Allaine, General von Glümer with 6 battalions, 1 squadron and 2 batteries. FINALLY, TO THE REAR OF THE CENTRE OF THE LINE at Bréviliers, awaiting the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, 8 battalions, 6 squadrons, and 5 batteries of the Baden Division, forming the main reserve commanded by General Keller.

The 15th of January.

The 15th of January was a bright, cold day with 22° F. of frost. Along the Lisaine the pioneers broke up the ice in the act of forming.

It was about 10 o'clock, when, in front of Montbéliard, Zimmermann's Brigade was attacked by the 3rd Division of the XVth French Corps coming from Bart and Dung. When soon after midday the 1st Division of that Corps also had posted itself

on the ridge of Mont-Chevis, the battalions of Landwehr, who had been fighting most brilliantly, were at about 2 o'clock withdrawn behind the Lisaine. The French artillery now appeared on the line of heights, but their vigorous fire was replied to by our heavy guns in the castle and at La Grange-Dame. Not till past 3 o'clock did the last German companies evacuate the town of Montbéliard, against which the French swarms of skirmishers were pressing. General von Glümer who was in command on the left wing now expected an attack and ordered his field-batteries to be placed in line with the guns of position. The 1st Baden Brigade—Von Wechmar—had already been brought up to the height from Grand-Charmont; the East Prussian Landwehr occupied the height of La Chaux and Sochaux.

After 4 o'clock the artillery contest grew very fierce. Reinforced by the fire of some batteries at Vyans, the French artillery poured its projectiles into Bethoncourt, and the infantry attack there soon followed. But the garrison of the place, the Goldap Landwehr Battalion, vigorously supported by the German artillery line, repulsed the assault.

Further north the XXIVth French Corps coming from Arcey moved upon Bussurel, but could not get clear of the woodlands before about 2 o'clock. On account of the unfavourable position of the village the Germans had withdrawn their line of defence behind the railway embankment. Thrice the French attempted to attack, but every time they fell back before the calm, steady fire of the Danzig Landwehr Battalion. Very considerable forces having made their appearance at this point Werder sent as support two battalions of the 5th Baden Regiment and two batteries from the main reserve at Bréville. A battalion of Grenadiers also, which Glümer had pushed forward in the afternoon with two batteries to Bethoncourt as reinforcement, on hearing the noise of battle, sent on the batteries with two companies to Bussurel. The artillery hastening up was in time to act with effect and checked renewed advances of the French at their first inception.

When at 9 o'clock the XXth Corps was pressing forward in several columns from Trémoin the troops still posted at Tavey in front of Héricourt, viz., the 25th Regiment and 2 batteries, had been withdrawn; but at the "Mougnot," which had been prepared for defence, the Graudenz and Ortelsburg Landwehr Battalions retained their position. Repeatedly the French endeavoured to get possession of this advanced post, but without success. The German guns placed along the slope of Mont-Vaudois as far as Luze commanded the ground all about. Bourbaki had instructed the three corps of the right wing to postpone their general attack till the outflanking movement of the XVIIIth Corps, advancing on the left, should have become effective; but as this did not occur the contest here too resolved itself into a cannonade kept up from the edge of the plateau of Tavey.

The decisive action of the day was expected of the XVIIIth Corps and Crémier's Division, which, as we know, had passed the night before the 15th at a considerable distance from the field of battle. These forces were expected to outflank the German right wing supposed to be at Mont-Vaudois. Only a few bad and snow-covered forest roads were available for these troops. Their marching orders had arrived very late. Crossings occurred and delays caused by the advance of the artillery, so that the 1st and 3rd Divisions did not deploy opposite Luze and Chagey until between midday and 2 o'clock in the afternoon. Only with difficulty could the French guns be placed

facing the German batteries on Mont-Vaudois, and the 1st Division on their right were unable to make an infantry attack on an extensive scale. The 3rd Division of the French Corps turned upon Chagey, which was held only by one Baden battalion; they advanced in heavy masses between 2 and 3 o'clock, rendering critical the position of the small body of defenders; help, however, arrived in time. The wing batteries of Mont-Vaudois pushed forward nearer and increased their effect, so that a single battalion of the infantry hastening up was sufficient, jointly with the defenders, to repulse the attack. The Baden infantry even pursued the retreating enemy up to the foot of the woody declivities. At dusk the contest terminated here after 3 hours; Chagey had been heroically maintained.

Crémer's Division had arrived at Béverne at 9 o'clock, when it encountered the columns of the XVIIIth Corps blocking the roads. It turned aside to the left in the direction of Etobon, whereupon the Baden forces of General Degenfeld placed there



CHAGEY (SEEN FROM LUZE).
(From a contemporary sketch by W. Emelé.)

fell back in the direction of Chenebier. At 11.30 Etobon was occupied by Crémer's leading brigade, and an hour afterwards the 2nd Brigade appeared, having toilsomely struggled through Béverne, which was full of troops. Meanwhile the opposing forces engaged in a languid cannonade at Chenebier. Crémer, who had received distinct orders to cross the Lisaine about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles north of Chagey and advance on Echenans—Mandrevillars, endeavoured to carry out this order to the letter. Leaving a flank-guard at Etobon, he pressed forward under cover of a mountain slope, now with one brigade then with another, into the Bois-de-la-Thure, but he made slow progress, as roads had in places to be cut for horses and guns. The night set in ere the Division had crossed the Lisaine. The advance from Etobon of the last of Crémer's troops was effected in the dark, but it led to collisions with the Baden outposts, which alarmed both the hostile forces, causing Crémer to extinguish his bivouac fires and to keep his men under arms in the dreadfully cold night. Crémer who had been instructed to seek the flank of the Germans now saw his own flank threatened by

the unexpected presence of the Germans at Chenebier; he reported this circumstance to the XVIIIth Corps, whereupon the 2nd Division of that Corps, which had remained behind at Béverne, was instructed for the 16th to move via Etobon against Chenebier, to support General Crémer.

Communication between the XXth and XVIIIth Corps having by midday still not been established in this rugged and woody country, Bourbaki, anxious about the safety of his flank, filled up the gap with his army reserve, at Coiseveaux, thus parting with his last troops available to meet any unexpected emergency.

Von Willisen's detachment had remained at Ronchamp. General von Debschitz had a slight skirmish at Vaudoncourt against reconnoitring French infantry.

Those Germans who were not engaged on outpost duty passed the night in the towns and villages situated within the line of fight; the French had almost all of them to bivouac in the open, notwithstanding the severe cold.

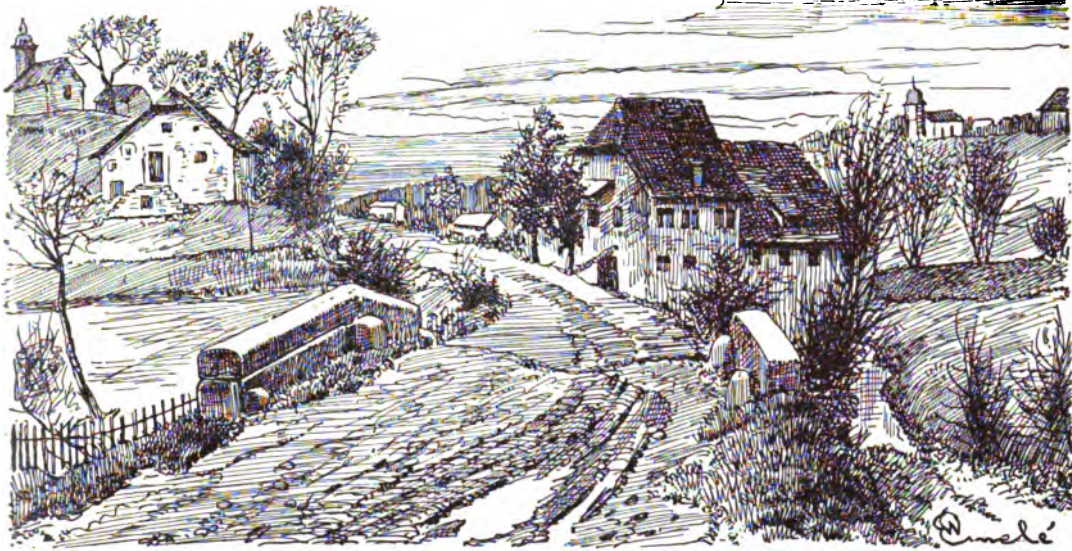
The XIVth Army Corps had held its own successfully on the first day of battle; the result could not but raise the confidence of the troops—the position of the Germans had been nowhere pierced, and the endeavours of the enemy had failed all along the line.

The 16th of January.

On the morning of the 16th the lower valley of the Lisaine was shrouded in fog, so that the artillery contest commenced late in many places; on the heights at Frahier—Chenebier, however, it was clear, and there the few battalions and batteries of General von Degenfeld had again on this day to maintain the right wing of the German position. From 7 o'clock in the morning Chenebier and the adjoining ground were occupied by two battalions of the 3rd Baden Regiment, one Baden and one Saxon battery of reserve, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Kraus. At Frahier, Degenfeld himself stood in reserve with the Eupen Landwehr battalion, one Prussian reserve battery and one squadron of dragoons. Soon they noticed the advance of the 2nd Division of the XVIIIth French Corps from Béverne upon Etobon; the three German *battalions* were now confronted by two French *Divisions*. At about 8 o'clock artillery of Crémer's Division issued in the south from the Bois-de-la-Thure and opened fire; but during the whole morning only an indecisive, and even intermittent, cannonade was kept up. At last at 1 o'clock the artillery of the Division of the XVIIIth Corps joined in at Etobon, and at 3 o'clock both the French Divisions advanced to a general infantry attack. Everywhere encircled by overwhelming numbers, the brave Baden infantry, defending tenaciously every suitable position, had to evacuate first Courchamp, then Chenebier, and at 4 o'clock it had to fall back upon Frahier, where, supported by the artillery and the Landwehr battalion, it fronted the enemy once more.

Degenfeld reported this state of things to the General in command and requested reinforcements, but meanwhile battle had been joined also at Héricourt, and General von Werder did not think it advisable to weaken his reserve at Bréville for the sake of the right wing; accordingly Degenfeld was for the time left to his own resources.

The French in the front did not pursue the retreating Germans energetically beyond Chenebier; nevertheless they had on the right wing reached the wood south of Frahier, and might thus have gained the road to Belfort in rear of the detachment. No reinforcements being forthcoming, Degenfeld led his troops back to the



CHENEBIER.

(From a contemporary sketch by W. Emelé.)

Rougeot farm, which is the highest point of the road between Frahier and Belfort, and is only about 4 miles distant from the fortress; this offered the last opportunity of once more barring the enemy's advance. But no such advance took place; Cr mer again occupied his previous bivouac in the Bois-de-la-Thure, and the Divisions of the XVIIIth Corps took up quarters at Chenebier. Only some weak outposts were pushed forward to Frahier and into the parcels of woodland to the south of it, and even these immediately fell back when a battalion of the reinforcements, which Degenfeld after all did receive in the evening, made an advance and gained touch with the enemy.

General von Werder had in the meanwhile taken into consideration the danger of his right wing being forced back, and ordered the reserves to be brought forward. At 4 o'clock in the afternoon the forces immediately available, consisting of two battalions, one squadron and one battery, marched from Br villiers through Mandrevillars; at 8.30 General Keller followed with two more battalions, who had been engaged during the day at Bussurel, accompanied by two squadrons. From the besieging forces also a battalion of the 67th Regiment was detached and sent forward. At midnight General Keller led these troops from the Rougeot farm to Frahier, which had already been reoccupied by the outposts. To the rear of the farm the siege-artillery entrenched three heavy guns to support the troops if they should be driven back.

Whilst these important events were occurring on the right wing, a fierce struggle was proceeding along the whole front.

The French infantry, who had forced their way into Montb liard, early summoned the garrison to surrender the castle; this being refused, they opened fire upon the castle, but without effect. Upon the height of Mont-Chevis-Ferme, at 11 o'clock, the artillery of the XVth Corps opened fire from behind some prepared cover, but it also failed to silence the German batteries at La Grange-Dame. Towards Bethoncourt the

1st Division of the XVth Corps pushed forward in the Bois-Bourgeois which extended to close up to the place, but it did not advance for the attack out of the cover of the wood before 3 o'clock, when the vigorous artillery combat was nearly over. The Germans were well prepared to receive the enemy. In support of the defenders, viz., the Goldap Landwehr battalion and a Baden company of fortress-engineers, Glümer had sent forward the 2nd battalion of the Life-guard Grenadiers and two batteries. The French attacking-force now advancing, was received by a destructive fire from infantry and artillery. The snow-covered bottom of the Lisaine valley was thickly strewn with their dead and wounded.

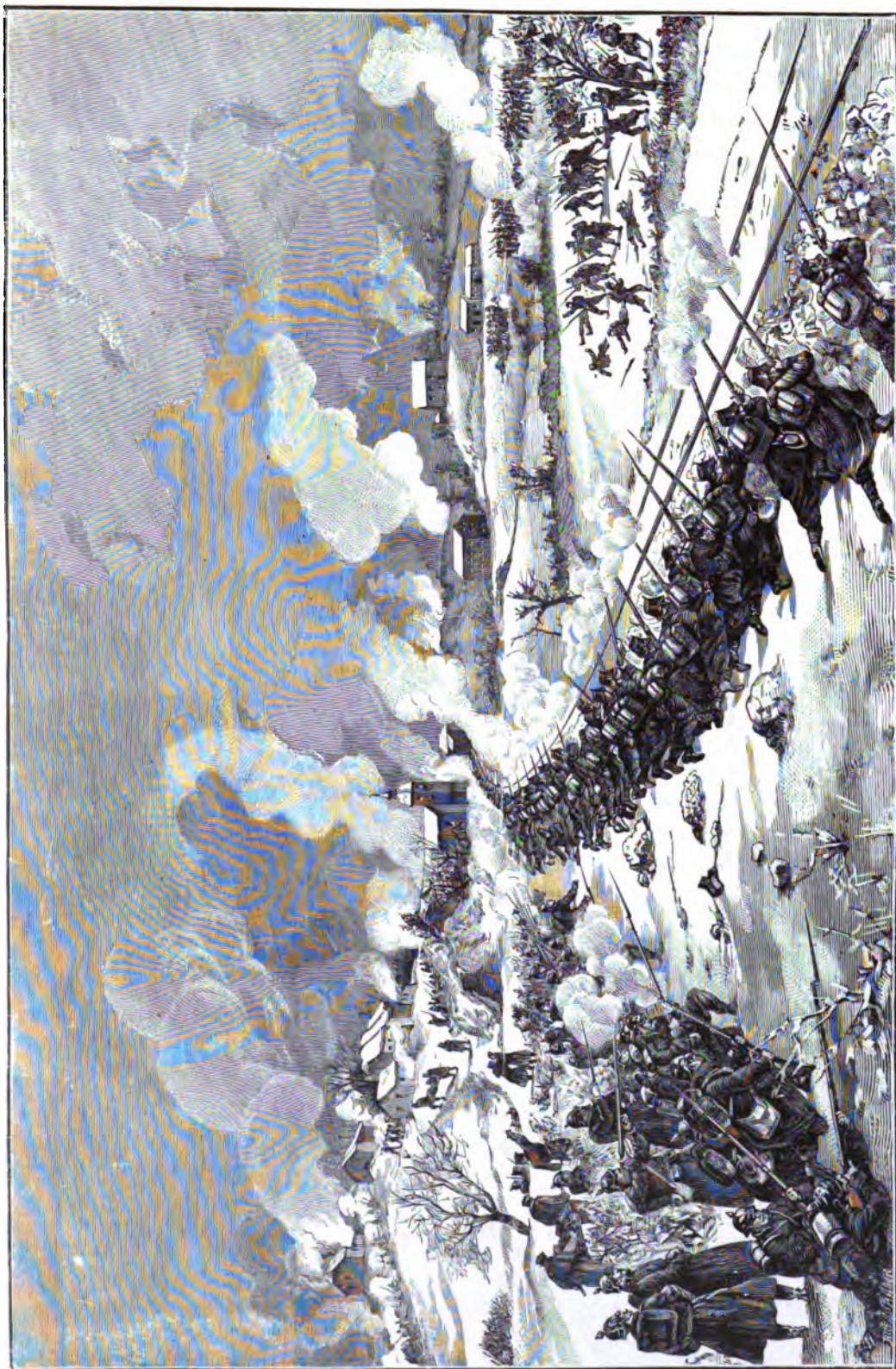
In the woodlands behind Vyans too a Division of the XXIVth Corps had been



BUSSUREL.

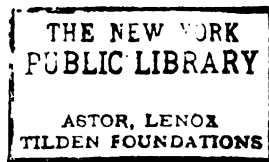
(From a contemporary sketch by W. Emelé.)

drawn up ready to advance through Bussurel for the attack. Some of the enemy's troops were still left in the place from the preceding day; facing them in close proximity, behind the railway embankment and the demolished bridges, stood the Danzig Landwehr battalion; on the height two battalions of the 5th Baden Regiment with two Baden batteries. Even before 9 o'clock the powerful French artillery upon the hills of Vyans opened fire, but the Baden guns in spite of their own inferiority successfully resisted. As it seemed that the French intended to break through at this point, General von Werder sent, under the command of General Keller, two more battalions and a battery from the main reserve. But the fire from the German guns alone, which the enemy was unable to silence, sufficed to keep the French masses of infantry at a distance.



COMBAT AT THE RAILWAY EMBANKMENT AT BETHONCOURT.

[face p. 522.



The XXth Corps had advanced repeatedly, but without effect, against the "Mougnot" in front of Héricourt and against St. Valbert; an attempt upon the southern end of Héricourt failed likewise. The French did indeed remain up to the evening near the German front, but only their artillery was at work. At Luze—Chagey the day passed without any very serious conflict; here too the contest was kept up mainly by the intrenched batteries of the enemy only. Bourbaki thought it impossible to burst through there.

The critical time for the XIVth Army Corps was in the evening of the second day of battle. As yet the line of defence was nowhere pierced; but the right wing had, after an honourable defence, been pressed back far enough to cause anxiety. It all depended on the question, whether the French would take full advantage of the successes gained, and above all, whether they would push forward greater masses in this direction. But their commander persuaded himself that the Germans would not form so large a front unless they had received considerable reinforcements; nay, he even dreaded that by extending their line still further the Germans would burst through at Montbéliard and force him away from the line of railway which supplied him with provisions; it seemed that this would be tantamount to the disbanding of his army.

The 17th of January.

We have seen that reinforcements, collected with difficulty, were sent during the night of the 16th to the hard pressed wing at Frahier; the force here now amounted to 8 battalions, 5 squadrons and 4 batteries; General Keller being the Senior Officer, was in command, and it was his task to ~~expel~~ ^{to keep} the enemy again from Chenebier, or at least so to keep him engaged in resisting the attacks of the Germans as to make it impossible for him to advance through Frahier, or from Chenebier upon Mandrevillars and Chagey. At 4.30 a.m., in the darkness and in perfect silence, General Keller advanced with his troops in two columns; one through Echevanne and the Bois-des-Evants, towards the group of houses north of Chenebier (Bois-des-Esserts); the other along the Lisaine, to the south-western extremity of the village called Courchamp. The French picquet at Echevanne was taken by surprise by the right-hand column, but succeeded nevertheless in alarming the troops in rear, so that while still in the wood the Germans were met by a stout resistance. With a view to exercising some sort of control over the troops engaged during the dark, the German General gradually withdrew his forces to the edge of the wood, where for a time both sides confined themselves to a contest of musketry.

The left column was more successful; it quickly forced an entrance into Courchamp, made several hundred prisoners and captured a great deal of baggage. But the adjoining village of Chenebier, scattered as it is in different groups and on several elevated features of the ground, gave the French the means of assembling their forces and arresting the progress of the Germans, especially as fresh French troops arrived at the break of day. Crémér's Division which was bivouacked to the south, in the Bois-de-la-Thure, did not during the dark take any effective part in the contest.

The attack made from the Bois-des-Evants by the right column of the Germans caused General Billot, the Commander of the XVIIIth Corps, who had hurried up, to fear that the Germans meant to push forward to Etobon, with the aim of ultimately

threatening the communications in rear of the French army. He therefore sent back a considerable portion of Cr  mer's Division to occupy Etobon; the rest of this Division was retained in the wood and near the ravine north-west of Chagey to cover the flank, and accordingly played a very inactive part. As early as 4 o'clock in the morning a Baden battalion from Chagey had endeavoured to push forward to support the attack upon Chenebier, but was unable to do so on account of the entanglements there, which were defended by a strong force. Nevertheless the attention of the French was directed still more towards that quarter.

General Keller seeing that the enemy's superiority of numbers was pressing more and more heavily upon him, and the right column was not making any progress, resolved at 8.30 gradually to evacuate Courchamp. His troops occupied a position on the western edge of the Bois-de-F  ry, right athwart the road from Chenebier to Chalonvillars.

Meanwhile General von Degenfeld had on the right wing thrown reinforcements into the wood, and after an obstinate struggle of two hours' duration he took it; but all attempts to capture Bas-des-Esserts, the group of houses in front of Chenebier, failed. Up to midday the attacks from both sides were continued; but the effective fire of the German batteries at Frahier, as well as the renewed efforts of the 2nd battalion of the 3rd Baden Regiment from the side of Chagey, made it impossible for the French to establish themselves permanently in front of Chenebier. Gradually the contest slackened; the German line of battle extended from Echevanne to the Bois-de-F  ry; to maintain it seemed to answer every requirement. The French remained at Chenebier and adjoining heights, and withdrew in the dark as far as Etobon.

By removing troops from the left wing and by disregarding the breaking up of tactical units, General von Werder had on that day with difficulty raised the main reserve to 5 battalions, 4 squadrons and 2 batteries; 3 of these battalions were sent to the right wing, and one of them joined the fighting line.

In front of the remainder of the German position it was only opposite the section Chagey—Luze that the enemy displayed any considerable degree of activity. All the efforts of the French artillery to gain the upper hand were in vain, and consequently the repeated attempts of the XVIIIth Corps to reach Chagey and Luze were unavailing. In front of H  ricourt only insignificant collisions and intermittent artillery combats took place; but Bussurel, which was still in the hands of the French, was set on fire. In the afternoon portions of the XVth Corps at Montb  liard attempted an isolated advance ushered in by a vigorous cannonade, but it was arrested and driven back in disorder by the shells from La Grange-Dame alone. It was obvious that the energy of the French was nearly spent. General von Debschitz also easily repulsed on the 16th and the 17th the enemy's attempts in front of the Allaine.

The being incessantly under arms, the constant bivouacking in very severe cold, the inadequate provisions, and heavy losses due to inefficiency of the officers could not but disintegrate the inexperienced French troops and render them unfit for a persistent attack upon an intrenched position. In these circumstances General Bourbaki resolved to retire, and this all the more, no doubt, when he learnt that the heads of General von Manteuffel's columns had arrived at Fontaine-fran  aise near Gray. He telegraphed to his government that he intended to take up a new position somewhat to the rear, and only wished that the enemy would follow and attack him.

A decisive battle of three days' duration was over. On the evening of the 17th

the Germans knew they had won it. The battles *subsequent* to the day of Villersexel together with this three days' contest cost them in dead, wounded and missing, 78 officers and upwards of 2100 rank and file. The losses of the French amounted to more than three times this number.

The enthusiasm and admiration for the heroes of these days, for General von Werder and his XIVth Corps, manifested all over Germany was enormous. Praise was given without stint from every quarter, and the Royal Commander-in-Chief sent the memorable and honouring message: "This three days' victorious defence, with a besieged fortress in the rear, is one of the greatest deeds of arms of all times!"

The French Army of the East had resolved to retreat. On the 18th, however, it still stood along the line of battle in full strength; only Montbéliard on the right wing and Chenebier on the left wing were evacuated; on all other points the line was reinforced so as to give the rearguards a firm support against being hard pressed by the pursuing enemy. The German reconnoitring parties sent forward as feelers, everywhere met with strong resistance. On the right wing Von Willisen's cavalry, reinforced by some companies returning from the Vosges mountains where they had been destroying the roads, advanced once more upon Ronchamp and drove the enemy out of Recologne and Clairegoutte. On the other side of the Allaine, Von Debschitz pressed back the troops that had been pushed forward from Besançon upon Blamont.

With the XIVth Army Corps it was first of all necessary to re-establish the coherence of the tactical units; in the stress of the moment battalions and batteries had been taken from wherever they could be spared. And the men were exhausted too; the incessant marchings of the last few weeks in deep snow and upon slippery roads, the strain of the covering and reconnoitring services had had their effects even on the conquerors. If the pursuit was to be kept up, order must be restored, as well as arrangements made for bringing up provisions, ammunition and reinforcements. Accordingly the commencement of the pursuit was put off to the 19th; serious contests were to be avoided, the enemy was to be harassed by perpetual alarms, and the advanced guards were supplied with powerful artillery. The strength of the XIVth Corps was wholly inadequate to press heavily upon the far more numerous enemy in this mountainous region abounding in defiles; the fruits of the victory had to be plucked by the army of General von Manteuffel, which was hurrying forward.

On the 19th the advanced guard of the Baden Division followed up the enemy from Frahier to Béverne; that of Goltz's Detachment to Saulnot; that of the 4th Reserve Division to Arcey; the main bodies followed on the 20th. Colonel von Willisen's force, raised by reinforcements to 2 battalions, 12 squadrons and 3 batteries, was directed to march upon Lure and to establish communication with the VIIth Army Corps.

The battle had not interrupted the work of the besiegers before Belfort, but the fortress and its garrison remained inactive.

THE OPERATIONS OF THE ARMY OF THE SOUTH.

General von Manteuffel, the Commander of the Army of the South, arrived on the 12th of January at Châtillon-sur-Seine, and found his troops, consisting of 56 battalions, 20 squadrons, and 168 guns, in all amounting 45,500 men, posted on the line Noyers—Montigny, the IIInd Army Corps on the right, the VIIth on the left wing; Dannenberg's Brigade covering the right flank at Vilaines. In weather, which at



SOLDIER OF THE GARDE MOBILE.

first was unusually cold, and afterwards stormy and rainy, the army by forced marches in execrable roads crossed the rough and cheerless plateau of Langres in 4 days, viz., from the 14th to the 18th. The long columns were moving between the hostile bodies assembled at Dijon and Langres, and were separated from each other by woods and mountain gorges, rendering all mutual support impossible. Only at Langres a detachment of observation was left for a short time, whilst the VIIth Corps marched past. The protection of the railway at Nuits-sur-Armançon had for the time been entrusted to the 8th Brigade (Von Kettler).

After some slight conflicts before Langres, both in the flank and in the rear of the Corps, the left wing reached the neighbourhood of Champlitte on the 18th, and on the same day the right wing arrived at Is-sur-Tille, and its advanced guard, after a march of 30 miles, at Gray, where it found the bridges over the Saône uninjured. The difficult mountain-range was crossed.

Neither the garrison of Langres of 15,000 men, nor the troops of Garibaldi and Pélissier at Dijon, numbering 35,000 men, had made serious attempts to retard the march of the German troops. The defence of the important line of the Saône was entrusted to a feeble, wholly inadequate corps of *Francs-tireurs*, because Garibaldi believed Dijon to be principally threatened.

From the reports made by Werder about the issue of the battle on the Lisaine, Manteuffel concluded that the Eastern Army of the French was under the necessity of entering upon a difficult retreat, and accordingly he boldly resolved to attack the line of communications in their rear. If this movement succeeded, it must lead to the greatest possible result; no less than the destruction of the French army. Of course it was a great venture, considering that the army of the enemy, although defeated, was still more numerous than his own, and that there was great difficulty in protecting his own communications against the troops assembled at Dijon. Moreover, it seemed probable that the separation from the XIVth Army Corps would be permanent, while his own forces had again arrived, in the depth of winter, in a rough mountainous country, the Jura, where provisions and shelter were difficult to secure. Without rest, the troops were called upon to make further great efforts.

On the 19th a gradual change of direction was introduced, and on the 20th the execution of the plan was finally entered upon. The Saône was crossed at Apremont, Gray, Seveux and Savoyeux; and on the 21st the VIIth Army Corps crossed the Ognon at Marnay and Pin with slight engagements, while the IInd Army Corps crossed it at Pesmes. On the same day the advanced guard of the Pomeranians conquered the passage over the Doubs at Dôle. The left bank of this river below Besançon had been reached before the French, and the severance of the enemy's line of retreat had thus commenced.

On the 20th and 21st the XIVth Army Corps executed a change of front towards the south; its cavalry under Colonel von Willisen stood at Noroy-le-Bourg; the right

wing of the corps, the Baden Division, at Villersexel on the Ognon; the left wing, 4th Reserve Division, on the Doubs, close before L'Isle, and the advanced guards along the line Cubrial—Geney. Strong bodies of the enemy were encountered only in the valley of the Doubs; but everywhere the Germans saw evidence of a disorderly retreat of the enemy, and hundreds of stragglers surrendered without resistance.

On the 18th Bourbaki had quitted his positions in front of the Lisaine and led his army back in the direction of Besançon, between the Ognon and the Doubs. Only the XXIVth Corps had crossed over to the left bank of the Doubs at L'Isle and Clerval, and was ordered to occupy the few passes over the steep ridge of Lomont, between Clerval and St. Hippolyte, and to protect the retreat against an advance from the North. The Gardes and Francs-tireurs under Bourras, who had been sent forward from Besançon, were still posted at Blamont. General Rolland, the Commandant of Besançon, was charged with protecting the passages of the Ognon from Voray to Marnay, and it was felt that the protection of the Saône and the Lower Ognon might safely be entrusted to the troops assembled at Dijon and Auxonne. On the 21st the Eastern Army stood on the right bank of the Doubs at no great distance above Besançon, and further up the river as far as Baume-les-Dames, having Cremer's Division as rearguard in the neighbourhood of Pouligney. When reports came in in the evening, that the Germans were not only in possession of the passages of the Ognon, but were already on the *left* bank of the Doubs, then the French commander suddenly became aware of his imminent danger. The halt planned for the weary troops had to be abandoned, and the march had to be hastily resumed. The XVth Corps was ordered immediately to send forward its first Division by rail from Baume-les-Dames to Quingey—Mouchard, and at all costs to hold this point of junction in order to secure communication with the south. Bourbaki resolved to move the army itself to the southern bank of the Doubs, lest he should have to fight with the river in his rear.

The nearest support for Bourbaki in his critical position was that which might have been afforded from Dijon, where French forces were assembled equal, at any rate in number, to the Southern Army; but Garibaldi and Bordone, the chief of his staff, thought that their duty was restricted to the retention of Dijon, and that operations further afield were not reconcilable with it. Such views as these had already delivered over to the Germans the mountain-passes, the defiles of the Côte d'Or and the passages over the Saône. Now all coöperation with Bourbaki was abandoned! Garibaldi did more in the way of strengthening his position at Dijon. This place, which offered natural advantages, had received in its immediate neighbourhood a very powerful girdle of defence, consisting of earthworks, batteries with connecting shelter-trenches, and buildings prepared for defence; about it were distributed some eighty field-guns, of which some were of heavy calibre. At the west especially, the two abrupt hills, with the villages Talant and Fontaine, formed, what might be called, two protective forts.

The Germans were not aware of the extent of these works; the numerical force of Garibaldi was also under-estimated and his inactivity was thus accounted for.

To distract the attention of the French from the flank march of the Southern Army, General von Kettler, who was still at Montbard, was ordered by the Commander-in-Chief to make a demonstration on the 18th by Sombernon and St. Seine towards



BATTLE AT FONTAINE CHURCHYARD.

dusk. Major von Conta too had fought an equally spirited battle on the road from

Dijon. An order soon followed, on the 21st to advance and take possession of Dijon. Inclusive of a detachment of one battalion and one squadron under Major von Conta, which was on the march from Is-sur-Tille upon Dijon, Kettler had available for this expedition only $5\frac{1}{4}$ battalions, 2 squadrons and 2 batteries. On the 21st he drove away without difficulty the advanced Francs-tireurs on the brook Suzon, and took the villages of Daix and Plombières by assault, but in spite of all valour the attack was arrested in front of Taland and Fontaine. After having suffered heavy losses, the battle terminated at

Langres, near Messigny. On the 22nd Kettler gave his wearied troops a day of rest, which the enemy did not venture seriously to disturb; on the 23rd he moved to his left, into the plain, keeping only $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the northern edge of Dijon, again without being disturbed. When it was reported here that bodies of the enemy were on the march from Dijon upon Auxonne, he renewed his attack in the afternoon, to arrest the enemy. After an obstinate struggle the castle and the village of Pouilly were taken; the heavy artillery from Fontaine began to act with effect, nevertheless the brigade continued to advance, and attacked the positions which were held by the enemy in greatly superior force. At last the brave Pomeranians fought gallantly for the possession of a large factory which flanked the attack, till dusk set in, when the troops, exhausted with heavy losses, had to be recalled. From the nature of the resistance offered Kettler inferred that the whole French force was still assembled at Dijon. Not till now was it discovered that the colour of the 2nd battalion of the 61st Regiment was missing. At first it was doubtful whether the colour had not during the battle become attached to another unit. Nevertheless volunteers returned to the field in the dark to seek for the flag amidst the heavy fire of the enemy; only one of them returned, and he was wounded, all the rest fell during their fruitless search under the relentless fire of the foe. When the first standard-bearer had fallen, the flag passed from hand to hand, from officers to men, all fell like the colour party. It had been left behind in the dark, unobserved in a pool of blood, rent by shot and covered by corpses, and in this state it was next day found by the enemy.

The battles of the 21st—23rd January cost the German brigade 36 officers and 744 rank and file. The conquest of Dijon proved impossible; but the energetic and bold attacks of the small body of troops that persistently maintained its position close to the enemy, contained and kept inactive the garrison of more than 40,000 men. Garibaldi believed himself to be confronted by a large part of the Germany Southern Army, and did not venture to interfere with the movements of that army on the other side of the Saône.

The objective prescribed by General von Manteuffel to the IInd and VIIth Army Corps was the blocking of Bourbaki's line of retreat from Besançon to the south of France. Only a few roads were available for Bourbaki's march; the shortest and most important led through Arbois and Poligny to Lons-le-Saunier, and was the only one accompanied by a railway line. It could be effectively interrupted in the defile between the Doubs and the Loue, near Byans-Quingey, and south of the Loue at Mouchard-junction, the point of departure of the branch-line to Pontarlier which was connected with the south.

Further to the east, but by détours, a second great road led from Besançon through Ornans-Salins to Champagnole, behind the river Ain; and finally, a third could be found by Pontarlier, whither the lines of communication from the middle Doubs and the Loue converge like rays. It led from Pontarlier, closely following the Swiss frontier, through Mouthe and St. Laurent towards the south, being for the most part protected from the west by rugged mountain ridges of the lofty Jura.

On the 22nd the advanced guard of the IInd Army Corps cautiously advancing, found the bridges of the Loue intact, and the impediments and entanglements on the roads undefended. The head of the 13th Division of the VIIth Army Corps coming from Marnay, arrived at Dampierre, having on the way, at St. Vit, interrupted the

railway and captured numerous waggons with provisions; here also the bridges over the Doubs were intact. The 14th Division had pushed forward from the Ognon south of Pin, towards Besançon. Von Knesebeck's Brigade was left on the road Pesmes—Dôle, to observe Auxonne and secure communication with Gray.

On the 23rd the advanced guard of the IInd Army Corps reached Vaudray, and the main body closed up on Dôle. The advanced guard of the 13th Division dispersed without difficulty the detachments of the 1st Division of the XVth French Corps, which Bourbaki had sent out to hold at all costs the cross-roads at Quingey. So disorganized were the French troops by this time that the Generals were no longer able to place outposts. The main body of the 13th Division reached Byans and blew up the important railway bridge, which north of the place spanned the Doubs. The 14th Division had taken up quarters on the right bank of the Doubs between St. Vit and Dampierre, and had placed outposts at Dannemarie, when these were attacked in the afternoon from Besançon. Bourbaki had ordered Crémier to advance in the direction of Dôle, and supported him with a Division of the XVIIIth Corps; it was perhaps intended that this movement should initiate an attempt at offensive operations towards the west, between the Doubs and the Ognon. But the battle was fought so languidly that, in the evening, Bourbaki at once withdrew his troops within the range of the forts.

On the 22nd General von Werder gave to the troops of the XIVth Army Corps a day of rest, partly because the men were exhausted and partly on account of supply arrangements; at his front Clerval and Baume-les-Dames were still held in force by the enemy. On the 23rd, therefore, Schmeling's Division was sent forward to Soye, to reconnoitre round L'Isle, and Goltz's detachment was sent to Mésandans, to observe Baume; whilst of the Baden Division two brigades marched one on each side of the Ognon to Avilley and Montbozon, and one brigade to Rougemont. At Montbozon the Baden troops came in contact with the enemy, who quickly retired. Upon verbal command of Werder, Goltz ordered in the afternoon a detachment to move forward from Mésandans to Baume. It encountered outposts of the 3rd Division of the XVth Corps, which was still at Baume, in a strong position south of Autechaux, and dislodged them at fall of night. A detachment of the 4th Reserve Division also encountered French troops at Clerval; these retreated to the opposite bank of the Doubs and blew up the bridge. L'Isle was occupied without any contest and the destroyed bridge restored. The advanced guard which was sent over to the left bank by means of pontoons, found that the enemy was before them at no great distance. These were part of the XXIVth French Corps, which, owing to the growing confusion among the French Commanders, abandoned the defiles of Lomont and the Doubs and escaped to Passavant and Vellevans. To facilitate and cover the passage of the 4th Reserve Division over the Doubs above Besançon, General von Debschitz marched against the French forces still stationed at Blamont, Pont-de-Roide, and St. Hippolyte; but the small collisions which took place on the evening of the 23rd led to mere partial successes.

At the end of the day Werder conjectured that Bourbaki had covered his retreat by leaving a strong rear-guard at Baume, and he therefore took measures for making a concentric attack on the 24th.

The Germans by taking up positions at Dampierre and Quingey had on both sides of the Doubs barred to the Eastern Army of the French the shortest line of communication with Lyon, but as long as the French remained near Besançon, an

attempt to cut through in that direction was possible. Caution was therefore enjoined, but at the same time care had to be taken not to be deceived and held fast by small forces, whilst the main body perhaps escaped the envelopment by the eastern *détour* through the lofty Jura mountains. Accordingly the VIIth Army Corps received orders so to arrange its positions as to be able to repulse any attack, and yet be in close touch with the enemy. This disposition led on the 25th to a spirited combat at Vorges; everywhere the French were found engaged in preparing defences. The right bank of the Loue from Busy as far as Châtillon-sur-Lizon was seen to be strongly occupied by the left flank-guard; and there were no signs of a retreat from Besançon.

On the 24th and the 25th the IIInd Army Corps closed up towards the east, along the road from Vaudray to Mouchard; its patrols encountered the enemy in front of Salins and Arbois, but found Poligny still unoccupied. General von Manteuffel betook himself therefore on the 24th from Dôle to La Barre near Dampierre, so as to witness the occurrences at Besançon.

The line of communications of the Southern Army had in the meantime been shifted towards the north through Vesoul, along the old line used by the XIVth Army Corps. The duty of protecting it against Besançon, Auxonne and Dijon was from the 24th imposed upon Colonel von Willisen's Cavalry Brigade, with Knesebeck's Infantry Brigade, of the IIInd Army Corps, which was stationed on the road Dôle—Gray.

To the north-east of Besançon the attack upon Baume-les-Dames, planned by Von Werder for the 24th, was not made, because the French had evacuated the town in the night and blown up the bridge. General von Werder did not consider it expedient to follow up this hasty retreat of the enemy across the Doubs with the bulk of the XIVth Corps; accordingly he only ordered military bridges to be constructed at L'Isle and Baume, and the 4th Reserve Division to cross over to the southern bank of the Doubs. With the other portions of the corps he resolved to march off to the right, to quit the forest and mountain region between the Doubs and the Ognon, as being specially favourable to the defenders, and to draw nearer to the VIIth Army Corps; he thought that thereby he would more effectively carry out the additional instructions he had received of preventing the advance of hostile forces upon Gray.—Thus the XIVth Army Corps reached the neighbourhood of Voray—Etuz—Rioz on the 25th, and on the day following the head of the Baden Division came in touch at Marnay with the left wing of the VIIth Army Corps. Goltz's Detachment had remained at Etuz on the Ognon; it was to cover the flank march of the Badeners against Besançon, and be ready also to follow Schmeling's Division to the left bank of the Doubs, in case orders to that effect should arrive from Head-Quarters.

Werder's march to the right was not at first in accordance with the wishes of the Commander-in-Chief, who would have preferred the XIVth Army Corps to have continued to operate along both banks of the Doubs, and to have reinforced the 4th Division by the junction of Goltz's Detachment with it. By this means the flank and the rear of the enemy could have been assailed, and a retreat upon Pontarlier speedily discovered.

On the other hand, the arrival of Werder made it possible to make use of the VIIth Army Corps as well of the IIInd to bar the enemy's line of retreat into the mountains. Accordingly the Baden troops were to relieve and set free the 14th Division in their position of observation west of Besançon.

By the 23rd and 24th of January Bourbaki's situation had become exceedingly grave; already the German armies were masters of the most important line of communications in his rear. An attempt to cut his way through to the north-west or west might have improved his position if accompanied by a tactical success, but the advance upon Dannemarie by his two most efficient Divisions had not turned out very promisingly. The increasing want of discipline of the troops, and the repeated cases of disregard of orders seemed harbingers of coming disaster. To this was added the serious piece of information that the stores at Besançon would not hold out for any lengthened stay at that place. The Head-Quarters at Bordeaux of course took a different view of the state of affairs, and even sent on the 25th, in the evening, orders to support Garibaldi, who was being attacked at Dijon! The French army, that was fighting for its very existence, was to send support to the very men who ought to have covered its rear, and who by their inactivity had facilitated its being taken by surprise!

On the afternoon of the 24th the French General called his Commanders of Corps to a Council of War. Only one of these officers, General Billot, was in favour of attempting to cut a way through to the valley of the Saône by way of Auxonne, but declined to assume the chief command in that enterprise. Accordingly the Commander-in-Chief carried his proposal to retreat upon Pontarlier over the desolate plateau of the Jura, which at that time was covered with deep snow. To cover this movement from the north the XXIVth Corps received orders to seize again the passes of Lomont, which had been abandoned. General Crémier was to protect the imperilled flank on the south, and for that purpose his troops were reinforced by the 3rd Division of the XXth Corps and the Reserve of the Army. On the 25th these troops reached the Loue from Cléron as far as Ornans. On the 26th both the Divisions advanced towards Salins, but on being informed of the presence of the Prussians at that spot they halted along the line Déservillers—Villeneuve, covering the road to Pontarlier. Owing to its condition, the XXIVth Corps was no longer able to effectively obey the order to re-occupy the Lomont, and General von Schmeling's vanguard found no difficulty in the evening of the 25th in overthrowing the detachments placed on the heights of Pont-les-Moulins near St. Juan and to the west of it, and made 400 prisoners. The main body of the 4th Reserve Division remained at Pont-les-Moulins, with advanced troops towards the south. The 1st Division of the XXIVth French Corps marched back to Vercel, the 3rd had retired to Pierre-Fontaine, the 2nd had ceased altogether to obey orders and marched along the road from St. Hippolyte to Morteau and thence on to Pontarlier.

The 3rd Division of the IIInd Army Corps had advanced on the 26th upon Salins, and the 7th Brigade to Arbois. General von Fransecky was to discover whether the heads of hostile columns on the march were already moving south, and was energetically to reconnoitre in the direction of Champagnole and Pontarlier. But Salins with its two elevated mountain-forts barred the road through Levier to Pontarlier and thus covered the line of communication Besançon—Pontarlier. A somewhat serious engagement ensued, which led to the occupation of the town, but not to the surrender of the forts. Accordingly the passage through the valley was still blocked, and a détour had to be made by the south. The main body of the 3rd Division passed the night at Mouchard and Villers-Farlay; patrols observed Crémier's bivouac-fires at Villeneuve.

The 7th Brigade, whose head had marched from Arbois to Pont-d'Héry, found that road, as well as Poligny and Champagnole, unoccupied by the enemy. The second principal line of communication, leading from Besançon through Ornans to the south of France, was now in the possession of the Germans, and only the road Besançon—Pontarlier was open to the French Army.

The VIIth Army Corps persistently harassed the enemy at the Loue, and this led, on the 26th, to renewed conflicts at Busy and Vorges, which revealed the fact that this part of the country was still strongly occupied; on the other hand, the right bank of the Doubs at Besançon appeared to have been abandoned by the bulk of the enemy.

The 4th Reserve Division was, on the 26th, in touch with the enemy on the upper Doubs; its main body had reached St. Juan, and its advanced troops Aissey and Passavant.

Schmeling's movement southward and the retreat of the XXIVth Corps greatly alarmed Bourbaki, because he suspected that the bulk of Werder's Army was on the left bank of the Doubs. He therefore ordered on the 26th his XVIIIth Corps to make a counter-attack to the north of Besançon. Although the Corps started at 5 o'clock in the morning, still, with the disorder universally prevailing, the defiling through the town and over the Doubs, the ascent to the elevated plateau near Morre and the progress on the rutty and hard frozen roads took up so much time that it was afternoon ere the troops arrived at Bouclans, at the left of the 3rd Division of the XXIVth Corps; it was then too late to make an attack.

The events of the last few days and the evident impossibility of operating successfully with his disorganized army had deeply depressed General Bourbaki. He had, moreover, to endure bitter reproaches from the government at Bordeaux, who, lacking all knowledge of the condition of the army, ordered, instead of a retreat, offensive operations in the valley of the Saône. All this could not but distress the General very greatly; being without hope, and clearly foreseeing the unfortunate issue of the campaign, he tried on the evening of the 26th to take his own life. As he was severely wounded, General Clinchant, the Senior Corps-Commander, assumed the chief command, but under the most unfavourable circumstances conceivable. He immediately ordered for the 27th the march of the army to Pontarlier, and left at Besançon the 1st Division of the XXth Corps and the 2nd Division of the XVth Corps, because these men were intimately acquainted with the locality.

Under cover of the strong position of Pontarlier, the French General hoped to reach the still open, albeit difficult, mountain-road to the south, by way of Mouthe and St. Laurent, if he could only succeed in seizing and maintaining, before the enemy got there, the easily defended defiles at Vaux, Les Planches, and west of St. Laurent, which covered the flank of his line of retreat. The march over the plateau covered with deep snow, the thermometer indicating nearly 30° of frost, tried the undisciplined troops terribly. In the evening of the 29th the army camped in front of Pontarlier, in a semicircle, at a distance of about 6½ miles from the city; its left wing being pushed somewhat forward, the front extended from Bians by Sombacourt and Chaffois as far as Frasne; the XVIIIth Corps was posted in rear at Houtaud, by the brook Dugeon; and one Division of the XVth Corps was in and near Pontarlier. The XXIVth Corps and Millot's Brigade of Crémier's Division were already on the road to Mouthe. In the night of the 28th General Crémier was personally ordered to occupy the narrow

passes at Les Planches, Le Morillon and St. Laurent with 3 cavalry regiments who were halting at Mouthe and were armed with rifles. The XXIVth Corps was charged with protecting the long defile of Vaux.

On the German side the 1st and 3rd Baden Brigades reached the neighbourhood of St. Vit-Recologne, between the Ognon and the Doubs, on the 27th; they relieved the 14th Division in doing outpost duty towards Besançon, so that the rest of that Division was able to cross over to the left bank of the Doubs. As the reconnaissances of the 13th Division towards the Loue had made it known that the French had fallen back, it occupied the valley by Ornans and Amancey. On the 28th the 14th Division followed the enemy past Eternoz, with advanced troops, on the two highways to Chantrans and Levier. The 13th Division concentrated on its right wing west of Salins, and left the observation of Besançon at Quingey also to the Baden troops.



GENERAL V. ZASTROW.
(Commander of the VIIth Corps.)

On the 27th reports arrived at the IInd Army Corps, announcing the march of bodies of hostile troops on the road Pontarlier—Champagnole, in the neighbourhood of Censeau, and also the presence of French cavalry in Champagnole. General von Fransecky having already on the 26th resolved to intercept the enemy by making a détour round to the south, because he had learnt that great bivouacs had been observed at Villeneuve on that night, evacuated Salins on the 27th while it was still dark, and the troops of the 5th Brigade thus set free were drawn up behind the obstacles on the road west of the town, so as to prevent the enemy from breaking through; the main body moved south to the road Arbois—Pont-d'Héry, whence any intended retreat of the enemy upon Champagnole

could be opposed. Manteuffel, on being informed of this, ordered the 5th Brigade left to the west of Salins, to be relieved by troops of the 13th Division, so as to give still greater freedom of action to General Fransecky and to strengthen the out-flanking wing. Accordingly Fransecky was able on the 28th to move his vanguard (7th Brigade) to Champagnole, and his main body to the road Poligny—Montrond; Champagnole, however, was found free from the enemy, and nothing was ascertained as to a march of large columns. The 6th Brigade thereupon moved from Montrond further south to Pont-du-Navoy. From this place and from Champagnole detachments of cavalry were moved upon Les Planches and Nozeroy to search for the heads of the enemy's marching columns; touch with the last line of retreat still open to the French was already almost gained. To close up the gap between the VIIth and

IInd Army Corps, which had gradually widened, Goltz's detachment was on the 29th transferred by forced marches to Arbois. It had previously arrived at Marnay, and had on the 28th been placed at Arc-et-Senans as reserve of the Commander-in-Chief.

In the north the 4th Reserve Division had received instructions on the 27th to continue using Baume-les-Dames as base of operations, and to press upon the enemy and keep closing him in upon the road Besançon—Morteau. It so happened, that this despatch crossed a message based upon information from abroad stating that a new effort was being made for the relief of Belfort via Morteau—St. Hippolyte upon Montbéliard. General v. Schmeling did not consider this news at all likely to be true, nevertheless the message drew his attention to the events occurring in the east. The state of affairs on the frontiers in the eastern Jura mountains was but slightly known; troops of the enemy had been posted there a short while previously, and General von Debschitz had not got much beyond Blamont and Pont-de-Roide. This induced Schmeling to march on the 28th, not to the south, but east, into the neighbourhood of Sancey, and to look about him. At Orgeans he encountered a column of the enemy, but he also ascertained that St. Hippolyte had been occupied by Debschitz. The two Generals now planned for the 29th a joint enterprise upon Maiche. Schmeling executed it; but Debschitz having received counter-orders from the besieging corps, could not continue his march upon Maiche and thence on to Morteau before the 30th. Only feeble detachments of the enemy and stragglers were met with; on the other hand no reconnaissance had been carried out during these days in the country north of the road Ornans—Pontarlier, that is to say on the left flank of the VIIth Army Corps.

ADVANCE OF THE SOUTHERN ARMY UPON PONTARLIER.

Since the evacuation of the valley of the Loue, and also on account of the reports of the IInd Army Corps and the information obtained from prisoners, the Commanders were no longer in doubt as to the departure of the French from Besançon; and the news received in the course of the 28th pointed pretty clearly to their retreat upon Pontarlier. It was necessary to make for the mountain roads and there to go in search of the enemy. The general advance of the Southern Army into the lofty Jura mountains could not but bring about the catastrophe. Accordingly General von Manteuffel issued for the 29th the following orders:

A part of the IInd Army Corps will on the 29th occupy the mountain-road at Les Planches, and the remainder of the Corps will press upon Pontarlier; the VIIth Army Corps will hold the road-barrier west of Salins, and will, making its own arrangements for the defence of its left flank, turn upon Pontarlier in such a manner that the 14th Division which is already in advance, shall be able as soon as possible to assail the rear-guard of the enemy; the 4th Reserve Division is to join the enveloping movement of the army upon Pontarlier and take part in the engagement that may occur.

The orders of the 14th Division, however, having been delayed, it did not start until nearly mid-day, and its march was, moreover, retarded in consequence of the roads being covered with deep snow. East of Levier already the advanced guard came across bodies of the enemy retreating in disorder; north of the road the village of Sombacourt with the wood in front of it was occupied by the 1st Division of the XVth French corps. One battalion sufficed to drive the enemy out of the wood

and of the village, and to capture 2 Generals, 2700 men, 17 guns and mitrailleuses and a number of waggons, horses, and small arms. The enemy retreating in disorder was supported by the army-reserve at Bians.

The main body of the advanced guard had marched on towards Chaffois, which was found to be occupied. Fog and the night setting in prevented accurate reconnaissance, nevertheless the attack was made at once. There ensued a fierce engagement with the defending forces, consisting of parts of the 2nd Division of the XXth Corps; on the French side the XVIIIth Corps joined in, and the Germans had to call for reinforcements from the main body of the 14th Division. By 9 o'clock the whole village, barring a few farms, was taken, when the French troops suddenly ceased firing and, by flag of truce and the production of official correspondence, informed the Prussian commander of the armistice concluded on the 27th outside Paris.

This communication had been forwarded to both the Armies on the afternoon of the 28th, but, through the fault of the French government, incompletely to General Clinchant, because the exclusion from the armistice, expressly agreed upon, of the three eastern departments of the theatre of war was not mentioned to him.

General von Manteuffel being in possession of the correct text, immediately informed the troops that it was incumbent on them to continue the campaign to its definitive conclusion. The explanation could not, however, everywhere arrive in time to shew the baseless demand of the French for the cessation of hostilities, and thus interruption was caused in various places, as also on the evening of the 29th at Chaffois. General von Zastrow conceded a provisional interruption of hostilities, and returned the prisoners without their arms. The 14th Division remained in possession of the conquered parts the village, and the enemy of the farmsteads he still held.

The heads of the 13th Division also reached Levier, but only at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, having had to surmount great difficulties on the road from Villeneuve, caused by the deep snow and the slipperiness of the ice-covered roads.

Late in the evening of the 28th the IInd Army Corps received the report of the cavalry sent forward to Nozeroy. It had found the place occupied, had captured a convoy of the XVth Corps of the French and made a few prisoners. Moreover, the information ran that troops of the enemy had marched through Les Planches. Upon this General von Fransecky had his troops in Poligny alarmed that very night and marched upon Champagnole, whence he intended on the 29th to turn upon Les Planches and attack the enemy's marching column supposed to be there. The orders received compelled a change of plan: the bulk of the corps had now to march upon Pontarlier, and only a fraction of 4 battalions, $\frac{1}{2}$ squadron and 1 battery, was sent under Colonel von Wedell, from Pont-du-Navoy to Les Planches, with the order to block the roads leading from Mouthe to St. Laurent. Colonel von Wedell arrived at 6 o'clock in the evening in front of Les Planches, which was held by dismounted cavalry of Cr  mer's; this was, however, too weak to offer any lengthy resistance. Wedell expelled them, advanced immediately to Foncine-le-Bas on the road to Mouthe, and arrived just in time to compel Millot's Brigade, which was advancing and was followed by the XXIVth Corps, to arrest its march. The report of the armistice that was spread universally among the French may perhaps have had something to do with the fact that no attempt was made by them to overthrow the as yet feeble force of

the Prussians; as it was these were rapidly reinforced at Foncine-le-Bas, and remained there up to the end of the campaign, without being seriously interfered with.

The capture of this line of communication deprived the French of their last road, and there was only open to them a difficult mountain-path, which led along the frontier through Chapelle-des-Bois. The occupation of the defiles, with which Crémér had been commissioned, had been carried out ineffectively; he himself had gone beyond the imperilled mountain-passes with the bulk of his cavalry to St. Laurent, and had thus escaped the fate of the army.

The main body of the IInd Army Corps (the 3rd Division) came from Champagnole as far as Censeau, and passed the night of the 29th at that place and at Nozeroy.

On the basis of the armistice reported to them the French arrested their movements on the 30th. Among the Germans also the prevailing uncertainty caused the VIIth Army Corps to remain stationary during the forenoon. Not till noon did this Corps receive the positive order from the Commander-in-Chief to the effect that the enemy was to be prevented from escaping either to the north or to the south, that isolated attacks were to be avoided, that no negotiations were to be entered upon except upon the condition of the enemy laying down his arms. Thereupon General von Zastrow demanded the complete evacuation of Chaffois by the French, who left accordingly. The movement of the IInd Army Corps was also retarded by negotiations carried on under a French flag of truce, and it was already evening, when its advanced guard expelled the enemy out of the wood south-west of Frasné. When darkness had fully set in the place itself was taken by a coup-de-main, by a detachment under Lieutenant-Colonel von Guretzky, who captured two standards and 1500 prisoners. The bulk of the French troops here had already left, one Division of the XXth Corps having gone to Pontarlier, and Pouillet's Brigade of Crémér's Division to the defile of Vaux. But instead of halting at this important narrow pass, which was unoccupied and by which the French line of retreat could have been reached via Ste. Marie, Pouillet moved in that very night on to Mouthe.

The 4th Reserve Division, which had again turned south, reached on the 30th Vercelle and Pierre Fontaine, and Debschitz's detachment came into the neighbourhood of Maiche. General von Manteuffel had moved his head-quarters to Villeneuve, and Goltz's detachment, passing round Salins, had followed to Dournon.

The desperate position of the French Army was clearly understood at the German head-quarters, and a last supreme effort for liberation was anticipated. To be sufficiently strong to meet this contingency Von Manteuffel ordered that on the 31st all his forces should close up to the front. A flank guard of the IInd Army Corps occupied the defile of Vaux, dispersed the detachments of the XXIVth Corps that had been hastily sent there after Pouillet had gone by it, seized Ste. Marie at the eastern end of the defile, and thus made itself master of the road Pontarlier—Mouthe. The 14th Division of the VIIth Army Corps occupied unhindered the line of the brook Dugeon, up to the defile La Vrène, on the great highway to Besançon. The 13th Division closed up after it towards Sept-Fontaines. In the evening junction was effected at St. Gorgon with the 4th Reserve Division, the main body of which arrived at Nods. Debschitz now stood north of Morteau, and Goltz at Villeneuve.

The disorganization of the French Army was already so complete that the Germans were able on that day, without any loss to themselves, to make over 4000

prisoners; all the roads were strewn with arms and equipment that had been cast away. In the evening the ring round the French position at Pontarlier was closed up.

Meanwhile General Clinchant had also received correct information about the armistice. Having lost all the defiles covering his retreat to the south, he stood before the alternative of either surrendering or crossing over into Switzerland; the Generals, summoned to a Council of War, having declared that the troops were no longer in a condition to engage in a battle, Clinchant therefore ordered his supply trains and columns, his sick and wounded to be taken back through the defile of La Cluse and placed under cover of the forts of Joux, which guarded the pass, and that very evening he opened negotiations with General Herzog, the commandant of the Swiss frontier garrison, about the disarmament of his troops and their crossing over on to Swiss soil.

The best regiments of the Army Reserve, with the XVIIIth Corps, were to form the rearguard and cover the retreat, in a position on the ridge of the Jura between the forts.

On the 1st of February, at 4 o'clock in the morning, the formalities of the treaty were concluded, and at 5 o'clock, in perfect darkness, the French troops began to cross the frontier in an unbroken line.

General von Manteuffel had fixed the hour of mid-day for the general attack; the VIIth Army Corps was to advance between the roads of Levier and Gorgon, the IIInd Army Corps on both sides of the road from Frasnè to Pontarlier, and the Detachment on the right flank was to join in in due course at Ste. Marie. The 4th Reserve Division was to join the movement of the left wing, and Goltz's Detachment was to stand in readiness east of Levier as the Main Reserve.

ENGAGEMENT AT PONTARLIER—LA CLUSE.

The 3rd Division forced its way into Pontarlier without encountering any very serious resistance, but all the streets were found to be blocked by military vehicles. Toilsomely they pressed forward through the deep snow, till they reached the valley running towards La Cluse. The French had prepared to offer resistance under cover of the Château-de-Joux, which was situated on a steep mountain knoll, and now opened fire. A fierce struggle ensued in the valley narrowed in by rugged mountain slopes. It being impossible to deploy a superior artillery force, the Prussian infantry ascended the rugged slopes amidst a hot fire and reached the foot of the fort, but were unable to take it, as the works turned out to be storm-proof. The mountains further south were also climbed, but there also it was found impossible to dislodge the enemy from his strong position, which was all but inaccessible. The detachment at Ste. Marie had also been unable to gain much ground.

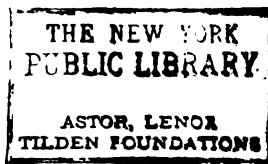
The VIIth Army Corps and the rest of the troops were unable to take part in the contest, which only came to an end when darkness set in. It was the last struggle of the campaign, and once again both parties had sternly measured their strength.

The passage of the French troops of the Army of the East to Swiss soil lasted the whole of the 1st and the night between the 1st and 2nd of February; 87,847 men laid down their arms, and 11,800 horses and 285 guns were handed over. Only General Crémier's Cavalry and that of the XVth Corps besides a few other regiments



RETREAT AT CHÂTEAU-DE-JOUX.

[face p. 538.



of horse and the fragments of the 1st Division of the XXIVth Corps escaped to the south, mostly by the mountain-path by Lachapelle-des-Bois.

The Eastern Army led against the enemy with such high hopes had been first repulsed and disorganized by Werder's tenacious resistance at the Lisaine, and then, down to a few fragments, swept away from the theatre of war by Manteuffel's bold advance. The three weeks' campaign in the Jura had been decided without any formal battle, by the marching capacity and discipline of the German troops. In spite of the inclemency of winter, the inhospitable nature of the country, and the ruggedness of the ground the army and its leaders had achieved the utmost that could possibly have been demanded of them.

There remain yet to be recorded in a condensed manner the warlike events at other points of the south-eastern theatre of war.

REOCCUPATION OF DIJON.

On the basis of the reports sent in by Kettler's Brigade about the engagements at Talant and Pouilly on the 21st and the 23rd, General von Manteuffel had determined as early as the 26th to send a special expedition against Dijon. Its execution was entrusted to General Hann von Weyhern, the commander of the 4th Division, and in addition to Kettler's Brigade, posted before Dijon, he received Willisen's and Knesebeck's Brigades, which were stationed along the line of communication, and Degenfeld's Baden Brigade. These troops assembled on the 27th at Dôle, and on the 29th they crossed the Saône at Apremont. Referring to the armistice, which had been concluded, the French demanded here also a line of demarcation, but this was promptly refused by General von Hann. On the 31st his main body arrived at Arc-sur-Tille, and his advanced guard, viz., Kettler's Brigade, reached Varois. A flank guard took possession of the bridge over the Ouche at Fauverney, and thus severed the connection with Auxonne. After a few shells only had been fired the enemy fell back upon his intrenched main position at St. Apollinaire-Mirande, and when on the 1st of February the Germans advanced against it, it was found to be evacuated.

When the attempt to obtain an armistice had failed, the army of the Vosges had left Dijon in the course of the night, partly by train, and moved into a department included in the armistice. The Germans once more took possession of Dijon.

CONTINUATION OF THE SIEGE AND SURRENDER OF BELFORT.

Immediately after the battle on the Lisaine the army besieging Belfort had been reinforced again, and as early as the 20th they proceeded to the capture of the advanced post at Perouse, which they effected without too heavy a loss. They were now able to construct the first parallel, extending along a front of nearly 2000 yards; a laborious task, which was not disturbed by the enemy.

On the 27th January an assault on both the Perches forts already appeared possible. Two columns started at dawn, but the works, which had ditches blasted vertically down into the rocky ground, and bomb-proof blockhouses at the gorges, were well occupied and defended with resolution; the storming parties were not at all places successful in surrounding the forts, and the enemy's reserves as well as the

guns of the other forts joined in the contest, so that the attempt had to be abandoned. The Germans lost 400 men, inclusive of a number of prisoners, who had only yielded after a sturdy resistance. The slowly advancing engineering attack had, willy-nilly, to be resumed.

In spite of all difficulties the second parallel, halfway to the Perches, was constructed by the 1st February, and these could now be played upon from a less distance by newly constructed batteries. But the besiegers had to undergo very arduous labours owing to the deep snow, the rigorous cold, and the rocky soil. For a long time the service in the trenches had to be performed by only eight to nine battalions, which taxed the small number of men so severely, that they could hardly find time to rest. The unusually heavy losses suffered by the engineers made it necessary to call up two fresh companies from Strassburg. A thaw set in on the 3rd February, the trenches were filled with water, and the arming of the new batteries by the boggy roads could only be effected with much toil. All this affected the health of the troops; it often occurred that battalions of only 300 men had to go on duty.



BAVARIAN PIONEERS IN THE TRENCHES BEFORE BELFORT.

Meanwhile the artillery of the besiegers gradually established its superiority over that of the defenders; the Perches were battered so completely, that by the afternoon of the 8th they were occupied without the necessity of making an assault. The enemy had abandoned them, and only in the Basses-Perches did the retreating garrison offer some slight resistance. The siege-works were greatly impeded by the artillery of the fortress. Not till the 13th was it possible to finish a trench 682 yards long which connected the two forts and constituted the third parallel.

At last the besiegers were in position to make a direct attack on the castle under favourable circumstances. The return of Debschitz's Detachment, and the frosty weather, which again set in, effected still further improvement in the position of the besiegers. Meanwhile the besieged had suffered terribly; hardly a building in the town had escaped damage, many were burnt down and the fortifications, especially the castle, exhibited the destructive effects of

the German artillery. The garrison, originally numbering 17,000 men, had lost 4700 men, and of the civil population 336 had succumbed. Infectious diseases increased their sufferings, the power of lasting resistance was broken, and there was no prospect of relief by an army from without.

As early as the 12th February General von Tresckow was authorized by the Emperor William to grant to the garrison free departure, if thereby the surrender of place could be secured. On the 13th, 97 heavy guns of the besiegers stood ready in the batteries to bring about the final decision. Ere they opened fire Colonel Denfert was summoned to surrender with recognition of his glorious defence, and under promise of favourable terms; in the existing circumstances the French government itself had authorized the surrender. Nevertheless the brave commandant declared that he would not surrender, unless in obedience to direct *orders* from his government. And that is what actually happened. On the 15th of February the treaty was signed at Versailles, whereby the armistice of the 28th of January was extended to the three departments hitherto excluded, and the surrender of Belfort was decreed. On the 17th of February the garrison evacuated the fortress, taking with them their arms and the archives of the place, and General von Tresckow held his entry at the head of his heroic troops. The siege had cost the Germans the loss of 88 officers and 2049 rank and file.



CHAPTER XIII

THE GUERRILLA WARFARE IN THE DISTRICTS IN REAR OF THE GERMAN ARMIES

By COLONEL GEORGE CARDINAL VON WIDDERN (retired).

THE ORGANISATION OF THE GERMAN ÉTAPES, GENERAL GOVERNMENTS AND TROOPS OF OCCUPATION.—THE FRANCS-TIREURS

AT the commencement of the armistice the victorious German troops occupied an extent of French territory equal to a full third of the whole of France. At its termination, on the 1st of March, 1871, the German Field Army on French soil numbered 464,221 Infantry, 55,562 Cavalry, and 1674 guns. At the same time there stood to the rear of these forces, as troops of occupation, no less than 105,272 foot, 5681 horse and 68 guns. These numbers sufficiently show what a display of force, especially of infantry, was required to cover the rear of the army, to secure its communications with home, to garrison the French fortresses that had been reduced, and to keep in check the population of the conquered provinces—for this was exactly the task imposed on the troops of occupation.

The discharge of this task required certain organisations of commands and of administration. A General of Communications' command was instituted for each of the separate armies, and a quatum of battalions of Landwehr and of squadrons of the Reserve allotted to it. A General was appointed to each such command, with a staff of officers and officials, and their duty was to follow their army in its advance and to secure the roads by which reinforcements, remounts and supplies of ammunition and provisions had to be brought up, and the prisoners, and the sick and wounded to be conveyed to Germany. For this purpose, at distances of 14 to 15 miles along these "roads of communication", "station commands" were established at suitable places, and to each a small detachment of troops was allotted as garrison for the station. The officers in command were mostly ex-staff-officers, re-appointed for the period of the war, with an adjutant to each, and, where required, some civilian officials charged with the management of the supplies etc. The strength of the garrisons varied according to the size and importance of the station, from one half to five companies; often also cavalry was attached, from four or six men up to a whole squadron. These garrisons were responsible for the safety of any supply magazines and hospitals established at their station, and they had to protect the transport of supplies, prisoners and sick and wounded, and of the mails of the field-post-office.

Great armies value for their communications with home more the possession of the *lines of railway* than that of the highways. In so far as the French railways were

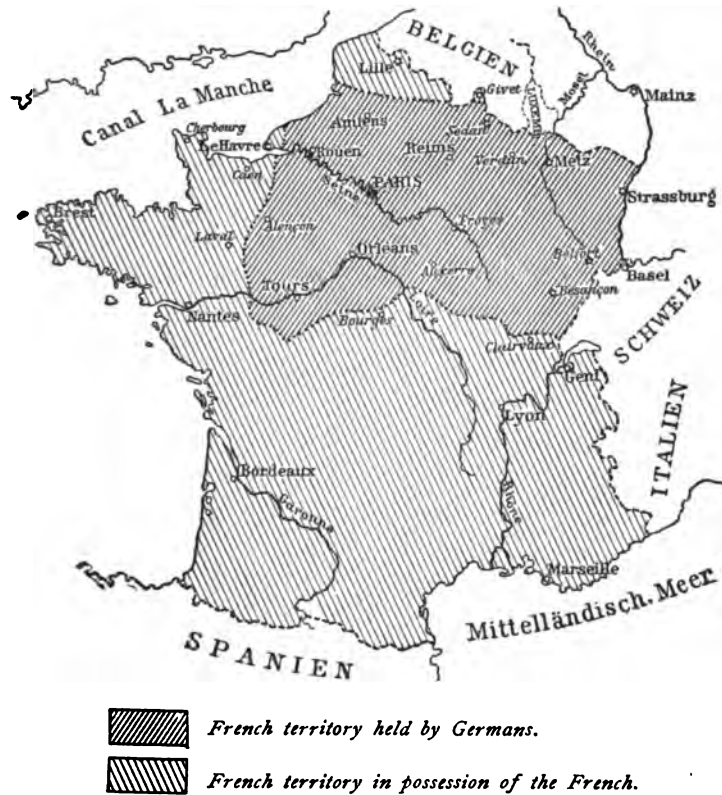
barred by fortresses, the lines were useless to the Germans in the conquered provinces, but the gradual reduction of these places of arms within the occupied territories placed these lines bit by bit in their power.

With splendid patriotic self-sacrifice the French had thoroughly destroyed the lines they were forced to abandon to the Germans, and had blown up all the bridges and many of the tunnels and viaducts. With labour protracted through weeks and months the German railway troops had to render the lines available again, and step by step, as this was accomplished, the railway lines were occupied at all stations, bridges,

tunnels etc. by the German troops of the lines of communication, both to prevent their being again destroyed and to protect the traffic against hostile undertakings.

The railways, as well as the roads of communication, were allotted to the several armies by orders from the Great Head Quarters. Towards the end of the war the distribution was as follows:

A. THE NORTHERN LINES. 1. Saarbruck-Metz-Thionville-Mézières-Reims, as well as Metz-Frouard; 2. Metz-Reims-Amiens-Rouen; 3. Reims-La Fère, Creil, Gonesse east of Paris; 4. Reims-Soisson-Mitry east of Paris, as well as the other lines terminating



THE FRENCH TERRITORIES HELD BY THE GERMANS AT THE END OF THE WAR.

in Creil; 5. Reims-Epernay-Clermont-en-Argonne. These lines were at the service of the First Army and of the Army of the Maas.

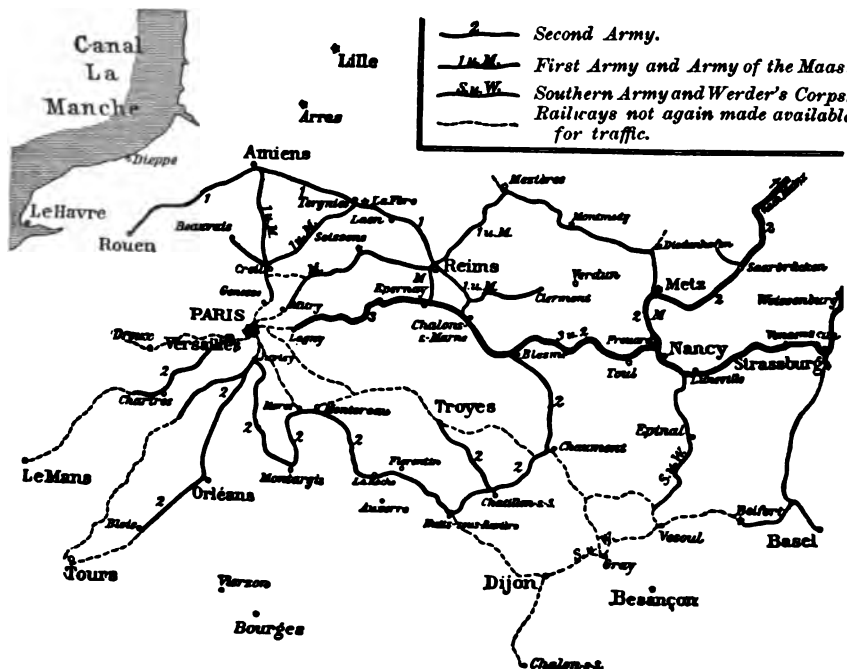
B. THE NORTHERN OF THE CENTRAL LINES. The Strassburg line, by Weissenburg-Vendenheim-Nancy-Chalons-sur-Marne-Lagny outside Paris, was at the service of the Third Army, but its use was shared in by the Second Army.

C. THE SOUTHERN OF THE CENTRAL LINES: branching off from line B at Blesme, past Chaumont, Nuits-sous-Ravières, Montargis, Juvisy-Orleans-Blois belonged to the Second Army, at whose service was also the line leading from the south-west of Paris past Chartres to Le Mans.

D. THE SOUTHERN LINES: branching off from line B at Lunéville by way of Epinal to Vesoul and Dijon; this was allotted to Werder's Corps and the Southern Army.

The Generals of Communications, with their staffs, behind the front of each of the several armies, were also entrusted with the restoration and protection of these railway lines.

In proportion as with the advance of the German Armies the lines of communication to their rear grew longer, so the difficulties of these commanders increased. It accordingly seemed desirable to create special commands for the administration and protection of those of the conquered districts which were at some distance from the



THE FRENCH RAILWAYS IN POSSESSION OF THE GERMANS AT THE END OF THE WAR.

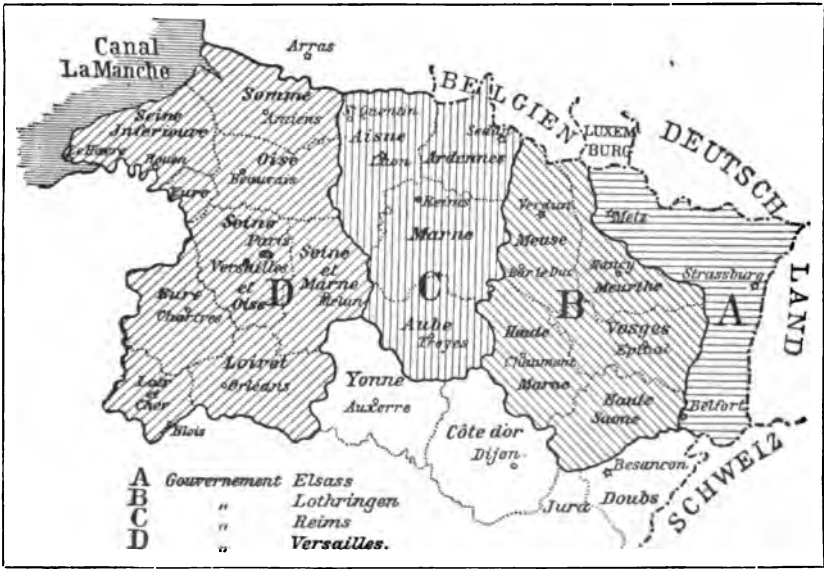
Explanation of signs: 1. The *dotted* lines indicate railways which had not yet been again made available for traffic; 2. The *full* lines indicate the railways under German military administration. The numbers and letters along the lines indicate the Army which had charge of the line, viz.: 1 = First Army; 2 and 3 = Second and Third Armies; M = Army of the Maas; S and W = Southern Army and Werder's Corps.

front. This was done by combining several French administrative districts (departments) into one *General Government*. In this manner there were formed by the end of the war four General Governments; viz., the governments of Alsace, Lorraine (Nancy), Reims, and Versailles. At the commencement of the armistice the departments Côte d'Or and Doubs with part of that of Jura were added to the government of Lorraine, and the Department of Yonne to the Government of Reims. Generals of the Army were appointed by the Emperor as Governors-General; they were assisted by German Government officials, who had charge of the civil administration and of the collection of taxes, and were supported by bodies of Landwehr troops to guard their several districts.

Thus the roads of communication and railway lines of the various armies, so far as they lay in the district of one of the General Governments, were occupied by the troops of that Government, and the sphere of the Generals of Communications and their troops only began in the regions beyond the conquered territories allotted to the Governors-General. At the termination of the armistice, i. e. at the end of February 1871, the troops of occupation at the rear of the armies in the field were distributed as follows:

	Combatant		Artillery Guns
	Infantry Men	Cavalry Horses	
1. Under the General of Communications of the First Army	4,954	135	
2. " " " " " " " " Second "	9,113	758	
3. " " " " " " " " Third "	9,450	1,274	8
4. " " " " " " " " Army of the Maas	4,234	287	
5. In the Government General of Alsace	27,176	1,211	18
6. " " " " " " " " Lorraine	18,709	990	18
7. " " " " " " " " Reims	18,466	750	18
8. Additionally in Lorraine:			
a) Garrisons of Metz, Thionville, Longwy under the government of Metz	13,170	276	6
b) Besieging Langres	9,409		

The work of the troops on the lines of communication was often exceedingly toilsome and fraught with danger. It was rendered somewhat easier through the fact



THE GERMAN GOVERNMENTS IN FRANCE.

that from want of cavalry the French were unable to make cavalry raids, but on the other hand the difficulty was enhanced by the bodies of Franks-tireurs. Immediately

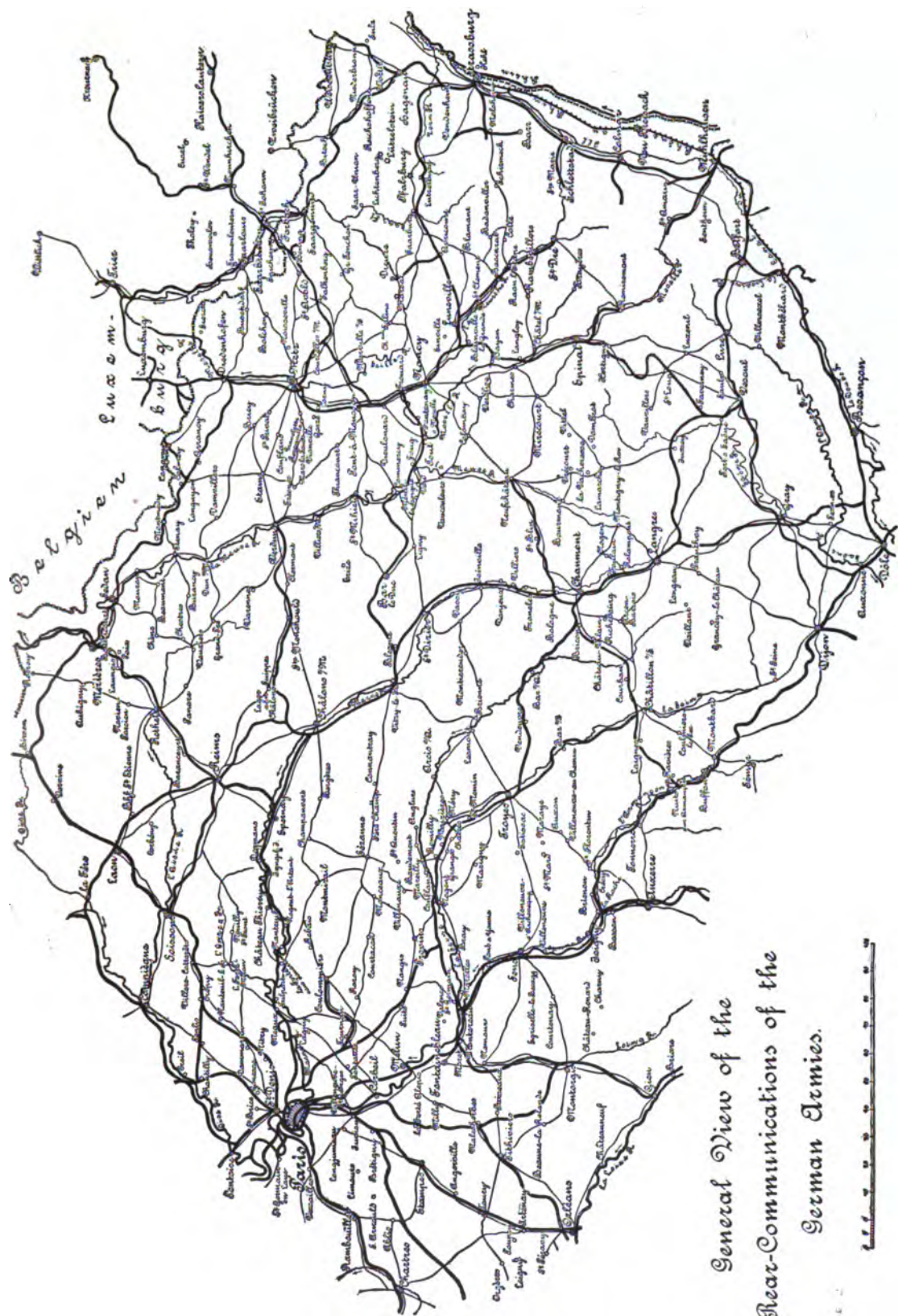
after the Republic had been proclaimed in France (September 4th, 1870) and Gambetta placed at the head of the "Government of National Defence" with dictatorial power, the endeavour was made to inflame the French people to a war to the knife by public proclamations. Everywhere men, not belonging to the army, formed themselves into companies of *Francs-tireurs* to take part in the struggle against the Germans; they assumed uniforms more or less fanciful, and were for the most part very well armed. It was their task to wage a guerilla warfare partly before the front and at the flanks of the different armies, and partly at the communications in rear of the Germans. Their attacks were made by surprise, or from hiding-places and from ambushes. According to the highest estimate they numbered 37,500 men inclusive of officers. Scattered all over the theatre of war and along all the German lines of communication the *Francs-tireurs* rarely ventured on an open conflict, and frequently changed scene and point of attack. Being well served by the rustic population, who acted as scouts and spies for them, they were very difficult to get at.

In addition to these *Francs-tireurs* there were in all the provinces in the actual theatre of war the National Guards of the Second Levy,¹ who were charged locally with harassing the Germans as much as possible, and rendering their lines of march insecure. For this purpose the State had supplied all the towns and villages with a number of smooth-bore muskets and a quantity of ammunition. These National Guards wore no uniforms, and they kept their arms concealed in woods and thickets. There they lay in ambush, waiting for the Germans. They never came to close quarters, but struck from a distance with firearms. Many a smart horseman fell by their treacherous bullets, and many a fusilier who had sunk down wearied from the long march was surprised and murdered by the stealthy foes.

The honest German soldier was all the more embittered by this behaviour of the *Francs-tireurs* and the National Guards, because they were wont at need to hastily assume the appearance of inoffensive peasants by throwing away and hiding their arms, and getting rid of every badge indicative of military service. That under such circumstances the Germans gave "short shrift" to such fellows taken red-handed, will be thought only reasonable, even though it is quite possible that at times innocent men may have suffered. The German authorities and troops along the lines of communication had nothing for it but to punish the parishes where outrages against German soldiers or destruction of railways and telegraphs had occurred, by levying money contributions or by burning down one or two homesteads. Such punishments, and the complete disarmament of the people and shooting of French civilians taken with arms in their hands, at last brought it about in many parts, that the inhabitants themselves endeavoured to put a stop to the *Francs-tireurs* movement, and abandoned all warlike enterprises.

The guerilla war was especially virulent along the northern and southern borders

¹ In 1870/71 Universal Military Obligation had not yet been fully introduced in France; it existed in name, but the well-to-do could buy their freedom from service in the standing army (which meant 5 years with the colours). The *Gardes Mobiles*, corresponding to some extent to the German *Landwehr*, consisted mostly of untrained men. The older men capable of bearing arms belonged until 40 years of age to the National Guards. Some of the more efficient among these were, as the First Levy, formed into battalions and employed as garrisons in the fortresses; the Second Levy remained at home.



General View of the
Rear-Communications of the
German Armies.



SURPRISE OF THE DOUBLE-SENTRY AT STENAY.

of the territories in the hands of the Germans. In those parts battalions of *Gardes Mobiles* even formed themselves into scouring parties, and the garrisons of French fortresses that were not invested took part in the expeditions against the communications in rear of the Germans.

We must restrict ourselves here to describing the most important occurrences only. In fact the guerilla war never ceased; some attacks were always being made on small bodies of infantry, on single horsemen, or small patrols, on small travelling detachments, mails of the field post-office, posts or patrols at stations on the lines of communication or along the railway, and railways and telegraphs were being destroyed. The *Francs-tireurs* were specially persistent in the neighbourhood of Paris, round Montmirail and Epinal to the east of the capital, and round Melun to the south of it, but they never shewed themselves in large bands.

THE GUERRILLA WAR IN THE NORTHERN DISTRICT.

The Third German Army, jointly with the Army of the Maas, had been surrounding Paris for some time (ever since the 19th September, 1870), and the First and Second Armies lay round Metz, while yet the small fortresses of Longwy, Montmédy, Mézières and Rocroy, situated along the Belgian and Luxembourg frontiers, had not

been invested, because there were no troops available. The garrisons of these places therefore detached raiding parties to act offensively against the German lines of communication.

On the 20th of September, 1870, a company of Prussians of 146 men belonging to the Army besieging Metz, together with 12 dragoons, arrived at Arrancy, 10 miles south-west of Longwy, to collect provisions for one of their stores. The commandant of Longwy sent 450 men to pick up those Prussians—and the French surprised them early in the morning of the 21st and inflicted on the Germans a loss of 31 men killed and wounded and prisoners ($\frac{1}{3}$ of the whole body!). The men who were thus taken by surprise assembled at the other end of the village, and thence assumed the offensive, and drove the French out after a struggle of $1\frac{1}{2}$ hour's duration. And now the place was all the more thoroughly stripped of provisions and forage because it appeared that the troops had been sent for by the inhabitants.

The garrison of the mountain-fortress of Montmédy was very active. At the time here spoken of, the German road of communication connecting the Army outside Metz with the fortress of Sedan, which was in the hands of the Germans, passed through the immediate neighbourhood of Montmédy. To protect this road small garrisons were placed on it at Etain, Damvillers and Stenay; this latter post was specially exposed, being within 10 miles of Montmédy. On the 14th of September half a company of Landwehr (96 men) marching from Damvillers to Stenay were surprised and dispersed at Baalon by 200 men from the fortress. The Germans lost 38 men, that is more than one-third of their number, the majority being made prisoners. A still more brilliant success the French gained by a coup-de-main against the station at Stenay itself. In the night between the 10th and 11th of October 400 men, infantry of the line, left the mountain fortress, and attacked the town at 5.30 in the morning from three sides. The German garrison of Stenay consisted of 211 men and 40 Uhlans. The double sentry at the chief entrance was picked up before the men could fire a shot. The guards offered some resistance, nevertheless the Landwehr being taken by surprise, lost 109 prisoners, 4 wounded and 1 killed. The rest retreated upon Beaumont. As soon as it was day the French marched back and took with them as further prisoners: the Commandant of the post, his Adjutant, an officer passing through, 2 military policemen and 36 men from the hospital, as well as 7 military vehicles and 15 horses. As soon as the Commandant of the neighbouring post, Lieutenant-Colonel Riefe at Mouzon, heard of the coup-de-main he started with his garrison (a company of Landwehr) in order to join in the contest at Stenay. On the way he met Captain Spohr of the Field-Artillery, who was on the march to bring guns to the troops besieging Verdun, with an escort of three companies of Landwehr. Both detachments united to make a common attack. But when they arrived at Stenay in the afternoon, the enemy was already in safety behind the walls of Montmédy.

The success of the surprise attacks at Arrancy, Baalon, and Montmédy stimulated far and wide the spread of the movement of the *Francs-tireurs*. The prefects were busy organizing the popular risings in all the French departments bordering on the districts held by the Germans. The same was done by the prefect of the department of the Aisne, the capital of which, Laon, had a German garrison and belonged to the General Government of Reims, while the northern part of the department with the

fortresses of Mézières, La Fère, and Rocroy lay within territory still under French control. The prefect had therefore fled from Laon to St. Quentin. The German Commandant of Laon, Colonel von Kahlden, Commander of the 17th Regiment of Dragoons, was ordered by the Governor-General to seize the prefect and to disarm the National Guards of St. Quentin. The success of this enterprise was possible only if the enemy was taken completely by surprise. St. Quentin is 24 miles distant from Laon, and numbers 40,000 inhabitants; to effect the capture of the prefect in so populous a town was difficult, even for a body of troops of adequate strength. Kahlden started on the afternoon of the 7th of October with 3 squadrons of his regiment and 230 infantry men in conveyances, and, passing through La Ferté-sur-Peron, he appeared on the following morning at 10 o'clock before St. Quentin, (30 miles).

As soon as he approached the suburbs he was fired upon, his approach having been betrayed. Amidst a heavy fire the Brandenburg Landwehr (Kottbus' Battalion) pushed forward as far as the bridge of the Somme, which was blocked by a barricade. At this spot the Colonel abandoned his enterprise, as the prefect could not be taken, and at 1 o'clock he began his retreat, taking with him 17 prisoners. His infantry had suffered a loss of 20 men, inclusive of 7 prisoners.

All over France Gambetta announced the "heroic deed" of the inhabitants of St. Quentin as a "great victory." If the population were not to acquire a taste for such enterprises, the Germans were bound to inflict a severe blow upon the popular rising by making an example of the "conquerors of St. Quentin." The Governor-General of Reims was, however, unable to set free the necessary troops before the fall of the fortress of Soissons (October 12th). On the 20th of October six battalions, four squadrons and two batteries which had been concentrated round Laon, set out for St. Quentin. Of this force three battalions, one squadron, and a battery remained behind on the march to invest La Fère; with the rest of the troops Von Kahlden appeared on the morning of the 21st before St. Quentin, which had a garrison of 1500 National Guards and Francs-tireurs, who had prepared the town for defence and stood ready to repel this second attack. When, however, the Germans had reached the Somme, and the six Prussian guns hurled their shells into the town, a messenger, bearing a white flag, appeared after the 24th shot and offered surrender. This was accepted; the National Guards and the armed inhabitants gave up their arms (about 2000), and the corporation had to pay a fine of 900,000 francs (= £ 36,000) and to supply 20 saddle horses. On the 23rd the Germans departed from St. Quentin, some to occupy Laon, a station on the line of communication, and some to the siege of Mézières.

Whilst these events were in progress the Francs-tireurs movement was taken up also in the Argonne mountains, through which ran two German roads of communication. The one led from the Army of the Maas before Paris to the rear, through Reims, Rethel, Grand-Pré, Clermont-en-Argonne St. Mihiel (on the Maas above Verdun) as far as the important railway station at Pont-à-Mousson, south of Metz. The other road united Reims, the seat of the Governor-General of the district named after this city, with the German Corps of Investment outside Verdun. Both these lines of communications were held by small bodies of troops.

On the 23rd of October the station Commandant of Grand-Pré was killed by Francs-tireurs, and the soldier accompanying him was severely wounded, whilst they

were going on duty to Vouziers, the next station on the line of communications. A few hours later the same body of Francs-tireurs at the same place surprised a German transport of hospital patients, and compelled it to return with a loss of 3 men and 2 horses. Eight days afterwards a similar surprise attack was made on a transport of the field post-office. Five waggons saved themselves by a rapid retreat, but the sixth waggon was attacked and three men of the escort were wounded. Thereupon the Commandant of Grand-Pré ordered a farmhouse near the place of the attack to be burnt down, it having probably been used as a hiding-place for the armed inhabitants, and several suspected persons were handed over to martial law. Francs-tireurs made themselves also felt between the stations at Grand-Pré and Clermont. In the night between the 26th and 27th of October they blew up the bridge over the Aire near Varennes, which was on the road of communications.

At St. Ménéhould, between Verdun and Châlons, there was a German telegraph station doing duty on the line Verdun—Reims. The telegraph officials were guarded by only 10 hussars. On the 29th of October the Francs-tireurs surprised the hussars, wounded two of them, made four of them prisoners, and carried off all the horses and the telegraph officials.

Towards the end of October Francs-tireurs began active operations also on the line connecting Reims with the troops of observation before Mézières, north-east of the station at Rethel. A postal transport train of 15 waggons, escorted by only six foot-soldiers, was fired upon and had to return to Rethel; a second transport train was captured and two Landwehr men were killed.

In the northern region of the General Government of Reims there were still in various villages several sick soldiers of the Army of the Meuse before Paris, who had been left behind; this was the case also in Moncornet, north of Laon. In the night between the 1st and 2nd of November a body of Francs-tireurs made their appearance at that place, and carried off 11 convalescent German soldiers. A few days previously a body of German engineers and railway troops engaged near the same place in repairing the line of railway, were surprised at Villers-Cotterets, and one engineer was severely wounded.

Destructions of railways and telegraphs on a small scale, made by the inhabitants of that same place and of the whole country in the rear of the German Army, are too numerous to be mentioned in detail, but they compelled the German authorities in charge of the lines of communication to act with rigour against the parishes within whose borders the occurrences had taken place. The measures of restraint increased in severity from money fines to imprisonment or even the burning down of buildings and farms situated at the places of outrage. On some railway lines where frequent destructions had taken place by unknown hands, repetitions were guarded against by taking citizens of distinction in the parishes by the trains as hostages.

At the beginning of October Soissons was being besieged. Before Mézières there was posted a small German Corps of observation, which expected siege-guns and reinforcements from Soissons, after it should have fallen. To transport the same the German railway-troops had restored the line of railway Soissons—Reims—Boulzicourt.¹ The railway was but feebly protected by small garrisons stationed at Rethel and

¹ Boulzicourt about 4½ miles south of Mézières.



Boulzicourt. There was only a cavalry-picquet of 11 dragoons between these two places, viz., in Launois (1200 inhabitants). This small body of men occupied a single farm-stead. On the 25th of October nine of these men were seated at supper, when Franks-tireurs suddenly fired at them through the windows and then attacked them with greatly superior force. Before they could pick up their arms their commander was shot and three dragoons were severely wounded. The rest were captured and together with their nine horses were carried off north to the fortress of Rocroy.

On the 26th of October a provision column escorted by only eight infantry men, and coming from Reims, was on the march from Rethel to Boulzicourt. Arrived near Launois, the column was greeted with a hot fire from out of a copse, by a body of Franks-tireurs in blouses. The column thus assailed turned right about and left 2 drivers, 17 loaded vehicles and 16 horses in the hands of the enemy. The same troop of Franks-tireurs, having succeeded in this coup-de-main, lay shortly after in ambush in a wood, waiting for a railway train from Rethel, said to be laden with siege-guns. Close by they had taken up some of the rails, then loosely replaced them with the view of causing the train to leave the rails. If that were to succeed the Franks-tireurs would beat off the weak escort and render the guns unserviceable. A train did actually come along, but it was laden, not with guns, but with a field pontoon train, escorted by half of the 1st company of the 9th Pioneer-Battalion (65

men). Fortunately the foremost carriages, containing the men and 50 horses, passed safely over the point of danger and there came to a halt. Thirteen carriages, however, fell down the embankment, which was several yards in height. The *Francs-tireurs* now opened a lively fire upon the pioneers from their lurking-place, which was at a distance of a few hundred yards only. Captain Lilie immediately led his men against the enemy, who took to flight. Several of the *Francs-tireurs* fell down wounded, others threw away their arms, in order to pretend, according to their habit, that they were harmless peaceable peasants. Some of them, however, were captured. Immediately after this, whilst the pioneers were busy unloading the horses, they were fired upon from the other side of the embankment, from a wood at a distance of 700 to 900 yards. The Prussians replied, pushed forward a detachment, and made some prisoners. Finally the *Francs-tireurs* disappeared. From the 12 prisoners it was ascertained that they belonged to a body of 300 *Francs-tireurs* from Rocroy and Mézières. The Germans had two wounded and lost one horse.

These three last mentioned assaults could not but embitter the German soldiers, and made reprisals necessary. The parish of Launois had to pay 10,000 francs (£400) to the families of the murdered dragoons, and the farm which was the scene of the outrage was burnt down. Six of the prisoners of the *Francs-tireurs* were court-martialled and shot.

Considering the insecurity of the transport by rail, the Commander of the corps besieging Mézières did not consider it safe to bring up the siege-train from Reims, and put off the nearer approach to the fortress till he had made a clean sweep of the *Francs-tireurs* out of the neighbourhood. Indeed Moltke himself had telegraphed on the 29th of October: "Clearing out the country round Mézières is more important than commencing the siege." Two flying columns, consisting each of two battalions of Landwehr and a squadron, were despatched from the neighbourhood of Boulzicourt into the tract of land between Rethel and Rocroy with orders to disarm the inhabitants and effectually to dispose of the *Francs-tireurs*. On the 28th of October two companies of the Ruppın Landwehr battalion (Brandenburgers), part of Colonel von Krohn's column, succeeded in unexpectedly attacking a superior force of Gardes Mobiles and *Francs-tireurs* in the neighbourhood of Rouvrois, 12 miles south of Rocroy. The French were dispersed and lost 15 killed and many wounded; the Germans lost one man (killed). The flying columns having driven back the companies of *Francs-tireurs* and Gardes Mobiles to Rocroy, returned on the 1st of November to Mézières, but the siege of the place had to be postponed once more. Along the road of communication of the Army of the Maas before Paris the *Francs-tireurs* of the Argonne Forest had succeeded in several coups-de-main between Reims and Verdun, near the stations of Grand Pré, Vouziers, St. Ménéhould and Clermont. Orders therefore arrived from the Great Head-Quarters to the Governor of Reims: "Siege of Mézières to be postponed for a time; observation suffices; surplus troops to be employed in clearing the Argonne Forest of *Francs-tireurs*." Five battalions, two squadrons and a battery carried out in two columns, from the 2nd to the 10th of November, flying expeditions through the Argonnes, but were unable to come into touch with the *Francs-tireurs* of the place. A closer investment of Mézières only began after the middle of November, and on the 1st of January, 1871, the place surrendered to the 14th Division of Infantry; the latter had, up till the last, been frequently annoyed by the action in their rear of

Francs-tireurs from Rocroy. At last on the 5th of January this "Nest of Francs-tireurs" also fell into the hands of the Germans, by a very audacious and lucky undertaking of Brigade-Adjutant First Lieutenant Von Förster.

Before this fortunate occurrence a collision between some Francs-tireurs and a company of German Landwehr had taken place at Vouziers, at the north-western edge of the Argonne Forest. The Germans (Brandenburgers of the Kottbus Battalion) were on the march from the neighbourhood of Sedan to Reims. On the 15th of December they arrived at about 11 o'clock at the village of Chestres, about two (English) miles north-east of Vouziers. At their first approach they were met by a hot infantry fire at about 500 yards range, from an elevation on their left. The enemy was covered by a hedge. First Lieutenant Schmidt, in command of the company, had his horse killed under him, but without a moment's hesitation he advanced upon the enemy, who lay under cover. Leaving one section behind with the baggage, he led the other two forward. Alternately firing and advancing, the Brandenburgers ascended the slope. The French did not stand their ground, but hastily took to flight, leaving some dead and wounded behind. This happened unobserved at one side of the village, which the Germans now entered wrathfully, expecting there to meet their enemy. In the belief that they had been attacked by the villagers themselves they made the burgher-master and 14 other inhabitants prisoners and burnt down several farm-steads. The company lost one killed and seven wounded, a sensible loss out of 140 men. Taking their prisoners with them, the company proceeded on its march. Subsequently it turned out that the attack from the ambush had been made by a body of Francs-tireurs.

CENTRAL DISTRICT.

The most important line of communication to the rear of the Germans in the central district of the theatre of war was the railway and the high road, which, passing through Châlons, Toul and Nancy, established communication between home and the Third Army and the Army of the Meuse besieging Paris. Here the Francs-tireurs were quite exceptionally troublesome in the regions south-east of Paris, north of the Seine from the mouth of the Aube as far as Montereau, and south of the line of the Marne from Epernay to Meaux.

On the 19th of October a company sent from the besieging army to bring in provisions from Nangis had, at that place, an engagement with a greatly superior force of Francs-tireurs and National Guards coming from Montereau, bent upon frustrating their attempt. In consequence of this the besieging army despatched Lieutenant-Colonel von Schröder with one battalion (760 men), half a squadron, and 2 guns (Württembergers) to clear out that district. This force, having marched all night, arrived on the afternoon of the 22nd of October at Nangis. After a second march at night over a distance of 14 miles, they surprised Montereau (6200 inhabitants) on the following morning so completely that the garrison of 400 National Guards allowed themselves to be disarmed without firing a shot, and there were surrendered in the town about 800 military and sporting firearms. On the day following, Von Schröder turned along the left bank of the Seine upon Nogent, 28 miles off, in order to disarm and disperse the Gardes Mobiles and National Guards there assembled. Having disarmed the villages on the way, he encountered serious resistance at Nogent (3500 inhabitants),

which he took by assault. Von Schröder himself received four bullet wounds. The Germans lost in killed and wounded, 3 officers, 50 rank and file and 8 horses. The French, Gardes Mobiles, National Guards and Francs-tireurs, upwards of 2000 men, suffered still greater losses, inclusive of 300 prisoners; the rest escaped to Troyes. Now the flying column started on the return march to rejoin its unit before Paris, posted to the north-west of Tournan; it arrived there on the 27th, having marched upwards of 130 miles in six days. On the way a fine of £ 1080 was levied upon Provins. Wholesome terror had been inspired throughout an extensive tract of land, and a heavy blow dealt against the arming of the populace. A good stroke of work done by the Württembergers.

About the middle of October the roads leading from Châlons-sur-Marne and Vitry-le-Français to the besieging army were so insecure that the Francs-tireurs were able to make a series of attacks upon the German field-post and upon small detachments, and also repeatedly captured whole flocks of sheep intended as provision for the German army. A "flying column" of 2 battalions, 1 squadron and 1 battery (Württembergers), under Colonel von Seubert, was therefore formed at Coulommiers. Gloriously and incessantly active the column traversed in a few weeks the neighbourhoods of Montmirail, Sezanne, and Provins, and prevented all extensive popular risings against the rear of the besieging army, and also—jointly with the troops distributed over this part of the lines of communication—all coups-de-main against the railway line from Epernay to Meaux. Nevertheless the Francs-tireurs movement was never wholly suppressed in this district.

One of the places on the said line of railway at which German troops were stationed was Dormans. On the 27th of December there was despatched from this place a company (180 men) of the 2nd Prussian Battalion of Jäger-reserves, with orders from the Governor-General at Reims to march south to Troyes to reinforce the garrison there. The distance along the route followed was nearly 90 miles. Over the whole of that distance there were no German troops whatever! and on the way taxes had to be collected. On the 2nd of January, 1871, the company encountered greatly superior forces of the enemy's infantry between Marcilly and Conflans,^{*} on the right bank of the Seine. These barred the way of the Germans with a fierce fire from a well-chosen position. Whilst the Jägers made ready to fall upon the enemy the tocsin was rung and summoned the National Guards from all the places round. The Germans soon saw themselves completely surrounded, though at first only at a distance, and were directly attacked from Conflans by a force of several hundred men. There was nothing left but to cut their way through. This movement was carried out in the direction of Vitry-le-Français which was the nearest station on the lines of communication occupied by German troops. In view of the resolute bearing of the Jägers, the French, who were estimated (possibly over-estimated) at 3000 men, did not venture near them; nevertheless, Captain von Basedow and two Jägers, both mortally wounded, had to be left behind in Marcilly. The Germans suffered a total loss of one officer, nineteen men (inclusive of two dead) and three horses; they also lost most of their knapsacks, and the baggage of the officers, the enemy having shot down

^{*} Marcilly is situated very near, and below, the junction of the Aube and the Seine; Conflans 2 miles lower down.

the horses harnessed to the cart. The cart laden with cartridges had been upset by the wounded horses and an axle was broken. After a march of 18 hours' duration over a distance of 50 miles the Jägers reached Vitry on the following morning at 8 o'clock.

The popular rising had secured a great success, and now the problem was to prevent the *Francs-tireurs* movement from gaining a fresh impetus in consequence of it. The station-commandant of Troyes, ¹ Colonel von Held, despatched on the 6th of January of his own accord, three companies (*Brandenburgers*), with five *Uhlans* to each company, by different routes to Conflans and Marcilly to disarm the inhabitants of the villages on the way, the whole population appeared excited and defiant. In several places the small marching columns were fired upon from lurking-places. The Germans always advanced to meet the enemy, and they succeeded in shooting seven of the *Francs-tireurs* who continually retreated; an equal number of inhabitants also were taken arms in hand, and were put to death. After the three columns had on the third day once more met at Conflans, the burgher-master and several inhabitants were captured and taken to be interrogated at Troyes, where the troops arrived again on the 11th of January.

To search and clear out thoroughly the district where the Jäger company had suffered their mishap the Governor-General of Reims sent on the 23rd of January—unfortunately delayed by difficulties—three flying columns simultaneously against Nogent-sur-Seine, Conflans, and Marcilly with orders to deal punitively with the two latter places for their conduct on the 2nd of January. For this purpose there started from Troyes in the south four companies, one troop of cavalry and two guns; from the north, from Epernay three companies, half a squadron, and two guns; and from Coulommiers one company in conveyances, two squadrons, and two guns, all in the direction of Conflans. In presence of such a display of troops the *Francs-tireurs* hastily left the neighbourhood, the National Guards hid their arms, and the whole population immediately assumed the rôle of innocence falsely accused. Not a shot was fired at the German flying columns; they had engaged on a battue, but captured nothing. On the 26th of January Conflans and Marcilly were given up to the flames. On the 28th the three columns united at Nogent, and on the 29th they started on their march back to their several stations.

SOUTHERN DISTRICT.

The rearward communications of the Second Army (Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia) were most imperilled during the campaign on the Loire. Its line of communication by road branched off from the railway at Joinville on the Upper Marne, and led through Troyes, Sens, Nemours and Pithiviers to Orleans, and thence on to Tours and Le Mans. The railway line through Nancy as far as Blesme was shared with the Third Army. From Blesme the Second Army had the sole use of the line leading through Chaumont, Châtillon-sur-Seine, Nuits-sous-Ravières, Montereau, Montargis and Juvisy near Paris to Orleans etc. Destroyed in many places, this line, nearly 400 miles long, had to be rendered fit for use by the German railway-troops.

¹ Troyes on the line of communication by road of the Second Army, passing through Joinville-(Troyes) Sens and Nemours to Orleans.

The repairs were commenced on the 10th of November, 1870, and only imperfectly finished by the 17th of January, 1871, so that a makeshift traffic could be begun along the whole stretch of line.

Between Chaumont and Châtillon-sur-Seine the line passed so near to the fortress of Langres, which for want of troops could not be invested, that its garrison, which rose at last to 16,000 men, could send out flying columns against the line. Moreover, further to the south, Garibaldi's Franks-tireurs, opposed to Werder's Corps, were in the course of the month of November so much disengaged that they pushed forward from Autun two flying columns, to act against the rearward communication of Prince Frederick Charles.

One column, under Ricciotti Garibaldi, advanced on the 18th of November via Montbard against Châtillon-sur-Seine. At that place three companies of Landwehr (460 men) and a reserve-squadron (97 horse) had arrived on the 17th as vanguard of the troops of the lines of communication pushed forward to cover the restoration of the railway. Only a few days previously the Xth Army Corps, as the left wing of the Second Army, had passed Châtillon on the march from Chaumont to Orleans. The picquets put out for the night having been drawn in too early, and the infantry having been scattered about for quarters and not placed in alarm-quarters, the Garibaldians succeeded on the 13th November at 5 o'clock in the morning in surprising the garrison, with about 450 men, and inflicting on them a loss of 8 officers, 184 men, 76 horses, and several baggage carts. Of these, 1 Major and 15 men were killed, 2 officers and 9 men wounded, the rest were taken prisoner. It was a heavy blow caused by our own heedlessness. The enemy's flying column withdrew the same morning to Montbard, and thence back to Autun.

Only six days afterwards another raiding party of Garibaldians (270 men), also coming from Autun via Montbard, succeeded in surprising the garrison of Auxon. This place is situated south of the section Troyes—Sens of the road of communication of the Second Army, on a branch road leading to St. Florentin, and had been occupied ever since the 21st of November by 100 men, infantry of the line,¹ under Lieutenant Frommhagen. This coup-de-main did not succeed as completely as the former; the attack was made on November 25th at 5 o'clock in the morning, but the men were able to assemble on the village road. Lieutenant Frommhagen and his men defended themselves most resolutely, but evacuated the place at daybreak. After a loss of 9 killed, 8 prisoners and 5 wounded (one of whom was the officer), the small, wholly unsupported band fell back the short distance of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and then they



GARIBALDIAN FRANCS-TIREURS.

¹ Men of weak marching capacity left behind by the IXth Army Corps.

requested support from Troyes. On the day following the reinforcements arrived (one company and a troop of dragoons), and then Auxon was again occupied; as the inhabitants of the place and the neighbourhood had taken part in the aggression, the 7 homesteads in which the garrison had been surprised, were burnt down and the parish was mulcted in a money fine.

North-west of Auxon the forest of Othe extends as far as the River Yonne, and bands of *Francs-tireurs* used these woodlands as a base for expeditions against the Troyes—Sens section of the road of communications. The General of Communications



ENGAGEMENT ROUND THE CHURCH OF EGELSVILLE.

of the Second Army therefore had these woodlands searched on the days between the 25th and 29th of November, by the Detmold Landwehr battalion, and by 150 Hessian cavalry who were following in the rear of the army. The presence of the *Francs-tireurs* was frequently noticed, but they could not be got at. The battalion moved on beyond Sens, to occupy the stations Nemours and Pithiviers.

A few days before, Major Lehmann had been more successful with two companies, a troop of dragoons and two guns (Brandenburgers of the IIIrd Corps) immediately to the west of the Othe forest. When his Army-Corps left Sens to continue the march

upon Orleans, he had been despatched on the 18th of November in the direction of Joigny, to chastise some villages on the right bank of the Yonne, the inhabitants of which had fired upon some German cavalry patrols. Near the little town of Villeneuve the marching column encountered, in a position prepared for defence with shelter-trenches, a force of 150 Francs-tireurs and Gardes Mobiles, who opened a hot fire-upon them. The leading company advanced to attack the French, who were immediately dispersed by the first Prussian shell that fell amongst them. In the pursuit the Germans made some prisoners, and among them some armed townsmen without uniform. The town surrendered and had to pay a fine. Upwards of 200 small arms were given up.

On the 19th Major Lehmann advanced as far as Villevallier. An infantry picquet placed by him at that spot was vigorously fired upon from the opposite bank of the Yonne; they therefore crossed over, and in pursuing a band of Francs-tireurs, on whom they inflicted considerable loss, penetrated audaciously into the little town of St. Julien-du-Sault. The troops carried the burgher-master off as prisoner and returned. Meanwhile Major Lehmann had sent on his dragoons as far as Joigny. After their return the whole of the flying column marched away (the infantry on requisitioned conveyances), in order to join their Army Corps via Sens and Nemours. Major Lehmann's expedition as far as Joigny had extended to a distance of more than 20 miles, and had dealt a severe blow to the popular rising. The punishment of several places had been carried out according to orders.

In the time subsequent to these events the road of communication Troyes—Sens—Pithiviers was alive with the streams of reinforcements forwarded to the Second Army fighting near Orleans.

On the 2nd of December First Lieutenant von Bischofshausen passed through Sens and other places, with a draft of 152 men (Brandenburgers and Schleswig-Holsteiners). He determined to pass the night at Egriselle-le-Bocage, a village of 1300 inhabitants, situated about $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles south-west of Sens. He wisely kept all his men together in a single building, viz., in the church, the doors of which were barricaded from within. A double sentry was placed in front of one of the doors, and a part of the men had to remain on guard during the night; all the necessary arrangements were made to defend the building. Towards 3 o'clock in the morning the church was surrounded by a band of Francs-tireurs 270 strong, who immediately opened fire against doors and windows. The Germans hastened to their appointed posts and replied to the fire from the windows of the second storey. Suddenly flames flared up! On the windward side the French had heaped up straw, brushwood and wood to frighten the Germans, or to compel them to surrender by smoke or, if possible, by setting the church on fire. The Germans, however, stood their ground, and when day broke they rushed out simultaneously from several doors, which so surprised the enemy that he speedily sought safety in flight and made for a wood about 650 yards off. The Germans pursued and shot down nine more men, and then continued their march to the army. This brave band had only lost two men, the enemy had thirteen dead.

Towards the end of November the garrison of the fortress of Langres commenced active operations against the railway line between Chaumont and Châtillon-sur-Seine, by sending out small flying columns against it. At that time Châtillon was occupied

by 5 companies of Landwehr and 1½ squadrons; Château-Vilain by 2 companies of Landwehr; and Chaumont, as the most exposed place, being only within a single forced march from Langres, was held by 2 battalions, 1 squadron, and 1 battery. These were troops of the line left behind by the Second Army, and specially charged with protecting the railway.

On the 25th of November a raiding party from Langres captured between Chaumont and Château-Vilain a German telegraph-engineer as well as his escort of seven men. Also in the direction of Epinal and Mirécourt, that is to say towards the north-east, the Commandant of Langres despatched raiding parties to harass and combat the feeble German troops of occupation who were charged with protecting the road of communication leading from Lunéville through Epinal to Vesoul, and belonging to Werder's Corps operating round Dijon. On the 2nd of December such a body succeeded, after killing one man, in capturing at Contrexéville near Mirécourt a colour-sergeant (*vizefeldwebel*) with fourteen landwehrmen (Westphalians) who had been sent out to collect taxes.

On the 6th of December a body of 65 men (Infantry) marched from Chaumont to Nogent-le-Roi, thirteen miles north of Langres. In loading their provision carts they were attacked by the inhabitants and by the first company of Voltigeurs from Langres. The Germans evacuated the place, having lost six men. To chastise the town and to collect provisions two companies and two guns marched against the place on the following day. On the market-place the vanguard was fired upon from all the houses, and the main body was also assailed by a hot fire outside the town from various places of ambush; thereupon the Germans abandoned the contest and returned again to Chaumont having lost ten men and five horses. They had in fact been attacked by only three or four companies of the garrison of Langres; but subsequently the Commandant of the fortress himself arrived at Nogent with 2000 men and two guns.

The checks received at Nogent had to be avenged forthwith. Colonel von Dannenberg, the Commandant at Chaumont, therefore despatched on the 12th of December half of his Infantry, viz., six companies, half a squadron and his six guns to the place. Contrary to expectation they encountered very little resistance there. After the battery had thrown 171 shells into the town, the infantry swept the place of the Franks tireurs still there, and who had been standing at the barricaded entrances to the town; after that they burnt down the houses out of which they had been fired upon on the 6th and 8th of December. There were 26 companies of French near, but they did not intervene. The Germans then returned to Chaumont. During the next few weeks German detachments had frequent collisions in that neighbourhood with troops from the fortress. By the middle of January the garrison of the station of Chaumont consisted exclusively of Landwehr men, of whom two companies of the Deutz battalion had been pushed forward some 9 miles towards Foulain, on the road to Langres. In the night between the 20th and 21st of January the 56th provisional regiment advanced from the fortress in three columns upon Foulain, to surprise the Prussians; their sentinels were, however, watchful, and the men were at their posts; some of the French advanced as far as the village, but they were bloodily repulsed, and lost two officers severely wounded, as well as nine men killed and wounded. The Landwehr lost two men.

From time to time the garrison of Langres was threatened by detachments of Werder's Corps, otherwise engaged in operations in the south round Dijon. On those occasions the garrison had no forces available for expeditions directed against the German traffic now started on the railway leading via Chaumont and Châtillon-sur-Seine to the Loire and to the Army of Prince Frederick Charles. Supplementarily something has yet to be added with respect to these expeditions. On the bit of railway line just mentioned the garrison of Château-Vilain, west of Chaumont, consisting of two companies of Landwehr (Paderborn), were specially exposed.

In the night between 8th and 9th of December four companies of Gardes Mobiles coming from Langres sought to surprise Château-Vilain. The troops, however, under Captain Hauses, were watchful and stood their ground for three hours in the two farm-steads selected for defence, so that the French had to withdraw without having accomplished anything, neither did they succeed in effectually destroying the railway bridge. They suffered a loss of 9 killed and thirty-seven wounded, whilst the two German companies lost only two killed, three wounded and one prisoner.

On the 25th of December the French Marine Captain, Javouhey, started from the fortress of Langres with 40 pioneers, 24 artillerymen and 20 Francs-tireurs with the intention of carrying out a coup-de-main against a railway train at Bricon, between Château-Vilain and Chaumont. Just then troops were being conveyed by train to Châtillon. Javouhey's intention was to blow up with cartridges of gun-cotton a train laden with troops. But the detonating mercury required to fire the gun-cotton exploded in one of the quarters on the march, and when the party arrived on the 25th at 3 o'clock in the morning at Bricon they had to content themselves with removing some rails and loosely replacing them. Javouhey lay in ambush and surprised a German railway patrol of six men, killing two and making the rest prisoners. Towards 9 o'clock in the morning a railway train, carrying half a battalion of the 72nd Regiment of Infantry, was approaching the damaged spot, near which the ambush lay in the wood. The carriages left the rails, but came to a standstill without anybody being injured. Amidst a fire from the enemy the men of the Seventy-Second (Thuringians) leapt out of the carriages and advanced to the attack. The French took to flight, and the Germans pursuing for a good distance, made twelve prisoners. The French lost eleven killed, and among their wounded was also—severely hurt—Captain Javouhey. The coup-de-main which aimed at blowing up several hundred "Prussiens" had not done the French much good. The short fusillade to which the Seventy-Second had been exposed cost them two killed and seven wounded.

By the 17th of January, 1871, the railway troops had further restored of the line assigned to the Second Army the part Châtillon—Nuits-sous-Ravières—Montereau etc. To protect the traffic, all the stations bridges and tunnels were occupied by guards furnished by the troops of the communications. The line from St. Florentin as far as Joigny was held by four companies of a battalion of Landwehr (Westphalians) and 22 dragoons. Of these there were posted, on the 24th of January, in Joigny two companies and 20 dragoons, with guards at the stations of St. Julien-du-Sault, Joigny and La Roche; in Brienon one company with a guard at the station, and in St. Florentin also one company with a guard at the station, and another guard at the railway bridge near Crecy above Brienon.

At that time the railway line between Nuits-sous-Ravières and Sens was greatly

exposed, the army being far away at Tours and Le Mans. The French had assembled several thousand Gardes Mobiles and National Guards in the neighbourhood of Auxerre and Avallon to wage a guerilla war against the railway line which was only one day's march off, and by effecting extensive destruction to make it unserviceable again. The very feeble bodies of German troops charged with the protection of the line had not the faintest expectation of their danger, and were too feeble to detach a flying column to reconnoitre the country. Wholly engaged with watching and patrolling the railway, tied to the localities to be defended, and surrounded by a population which was bitterly hostile, the troops were exposed to surprise-attacks without receiving any warning of the approaching danger. Under these circumstances the Landwehr companies distributed in the section St. Florentin—Joigny were overtaken by a grievous disaster.

On the 24th of January 2000 Gardes Mobiles and National Guards started from Auxerre to damage the railway in the valley of the Armançon and the Yonne. Without being observed they reached certain hiding-places in the neighbourhood of the line, and made an attack on the German protecting troops on the 25th of January, between 5 and 6 in the morning, when it was yet perfectly dark. On that occasion their extreme right wing (1—2 companies) moved forward to the railway-bridge of Crecy, leading across the Armançon and situated two miles above Briennon. Meeting with no resistance, they destroyed it. Further below, 700 men entered Briennon, and after a short contest captured the 16 men forming the guard at the railway-station. The rest of the company stationed at Briennon repulsed several attacks of the French in a building prepared for defence, till daylight, when the French retired with heavy loss.

Upon the railway station of La Roche the French advanced with a force of 400 Gardes Mobiles and some Franks-tireurs. Four men posted there, at the railway bridge over the Yonne, were soon over-powered; the rest of the guard (26 men) were shut up in the station buildings, and, after a brave defence of $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours, compelled to surrender owing to the station having been set on fire by the attacking party. Having destroyed the railway bridge over the Yonne, the French retreated upon Auxerre, taking their prisoners with them. Their success had cost them 3 officers and 16 men.

To protect the coup-de-main upon La Roche against the intervention of German troops from Joigny, the French had pushed forward about a battalion towards this latter place, and this actually enabled them to induce a company of Landwehr coming from Joigny to retreat.¹

It was sixteen days ere the two destroyed bridges and the other extensive damages were repaired and the railway was again available for use. The French made no attempt to surprise the troops occupying Tonnerre and Nuits-sous-Ravières along the same line, because there the Germans had intrenched themselves. On the other hand, lower down the Yonne a band of Franks-tireurs, estimated at 200, twice tried, in the nights 25th—26th and 26th—27th, to capture a detachment of 28 men holding the railway-station of Villeneuve-la-Guyard, 14 miles north of Sens, but they were repulsed both times.

¹ The details of all these events are to be found in the book "Der Krieg an den rückwärtigen Verbindungen der deutschen Heere" (Eisenschmidt, Berlin.) by the author of this chapter.

To oppose all further attempts against the section of railway line Nuits—Joigny—Sens, which up to then had been so much exposed, the Commander-in-Chief detached six battalions, two squadrons and eight guns from the Third Army before Paris, and sent them, under General von Fabeck, via Joigny and Montargis, into the neighbourhood of Auxerre. This general arrived there on the 30th of January, and it was intended that jointly with the troops pushed forward from Orleans from the Second Army (2 battalions, 4 squadrons and 1 battery), under General von Rantzau, who arrived at Toucy on the 30th, he should clear the enemy out of the department of the Yonne and protect the railway. The section of the latter, attacked on the 25th, also received other strong reinforcements. On the 29th, however, the armistice was concluded and this put an end to all further contests here.

Shortly before the events above narrated the French had succeeded in an effective coup-de-main against the line of railway assigned for the joint use of the Second and Third Armies. On the 22nd of January, before dawn, about 300 Franks-tireurs surprised the detachment in occupation of the railway station of Fontenoy, situated below the fortress of Toul, which was in German hands, and blew up the bridge over the Moselle only 200 yards distant from the station. The German detachment consisted of a colour-sergeant (vizelfeldwebel) and 50 men (Westphalians). Two of them were killed, eight were wounded, and seven were made prisoners unwounded. A landwehrman, of the name of Pott, although wounded, withdrew along the railway embankment leading to Nancy to save from disaster the train that was coming up, and he succeeded in stopping it in time. In this train there were 40 men of various regiments and Captain Rössel of the 46th Regiment, who did not hesitate to advance immediately with these men upon Fontenoy, but he only found some stragglers, of whom one was taken. Troops despatched a few days afterwards from Toul and Nancy looked in vain for the band which the prisoner designated as "chasseurs des Vosges." They were marching southwards through the woods into the neighbourhood of Lamarche,^{*} whence they had set out for the coup-de-main. Shortly before the bridge at Fontenoy had been blown up, a train from Toul, with upwards of 1000 French prisoners, was approaching to pass over it, but the German double sentry, which had been placed on the bridge and had retired towards Toul, was in time to cause it to return. The village of Fontenoy, whose inhabitants were suspected of having taken part in the surprise, was burnt down at once on the 22nd, and the population of all Lorraine was fined 10 million francs (£400,000). As had been ordered on other lines, so it was in future arranged here, for every train to be accompanied by two French citizens, who were accommodated on the locomotive and kept as hostages. The blowing up of the bridges caused a very troublesome disturbance of the traffic. In spite of the most strenuous efforts of numerous labourers the traffic on a single line could only be restored after a fortnight, and on both lines after three weeks.

As has already been mentioned, the "chasseurs des Vosges" had returned from Fontenoy to Lamarche. A few miles north of this town, which is surrounded by extensive woodlands, the French had some months ago formed in the dense forest a hutted camp fitted up for defence, and thence the 300 "chasseurs des Vosges" had

^{*} Lamarche is 25 miles as the crow flies, north-east of the fortress of Langres.

repeatedly carried out flying excursions against the line of communication Nancy—Chaumont, as well as against the railway and highway line Luneville—Epinal—Vesoul, which constituted the rearward communications of Werder's Corps. In this camp the newly enlisted *Francs-tireurs* received their training. Repeated inroads of flying parties of the Germans from the stations of Chaumont, Epinal, Mirécourt, and Neufchâteau against Lamarche had led to several small victorious skirmishes, but not to the discovery of the camp of the *Francs-tireurs*.

Whilst the 300 "*chasseurs des Vosges*" were on the way to destroy the bridge at Fontenoy, the French commandant of Langres had sent a battalion of *Gardes Mobiles* to the hidden camp to protect both it and the *Francs-tireurs* still under training there. The greater part of this battalion was at Vrécourt on the 21st of January, to protect the camp against the German troops, who on the 20th had started south from the station on the line of communication at Neufchâteau. These two companies of Prussian *Landwehr*, accompanied by half a squadron of reserves under Lieutenant-Colonel von Dobschütz, succeeded on the 21st in overtaking the *Gardes Mobiles* at Vrécourt, and in attacking, defeating and dispersing them. The French lost many killed and wounded and left 56 prisoners in the hands of the Germans, who themselves only lost three killed, three wounded and several horses.

At last the camp of the *Francs-tireurs* had been discovered to be at La Vacheresse near Lamarche, and was being surrounded by five battalions with cavalry and artillery coming from Chaumont, Neufchâteau and Epinal, when news arrived of the armistice concluded on the 29th of January, which put a stop to all further action.

A few days previously the garrison of the fortress of Langres had carried out some more coups-de-main against the rearward communications of the German Army of the South. This Army, commanded by Manteuffel, had set out on the 12th of January from Châtillon-sur-Seine, to bring support to Werder's Corps, which was hard pressed by Bourbaki. With Dijon at his right and Langres at his left, Manteuffel hastened eastwards to Dijon, leaving behind Kettler's Brigade of the IInd Corps with orders to protect the communications of the Army of the South with Châtillon. This brigade stood at the distance of one march north of Dijon, round Is-sur-Till, and kept up communication with Châtillon by means of the connecting-posts established at Leuglay, Germaine, Vaillant and Prauthoy. These connecting-posts consisted of 14 hussars to each, but that of Prauthoy had one officer and 22 hussars (*landwehr*); they were encamped in the midst of a hostile population in some cases in large villages; the men were without supports, and many miles separated from each other. Four companies and a troop of horse started from Langres to capture them. Parts of this flying column succeeded on the 23rd of January in surprising the hussar-posts at Germaine and Vaillant, and making them prisoners with the exception of one who escaped. The post at Leuglay retreated in time to Châtillon. On the day following, the reserve-hussars at Prauthoy, commanded by an officer, were fallen upon, and after brave resistance, the officer (wounded), 13 men and 10 horses were captured, and the rest escaped to Kettler's Brigade.

This latter now sent three companies of the 61st Regiment and a troop of dragoons northward to Prauthoy, to protect its rear in the direction of Langres, but on the 28th of January this detachment was recalled. Whilst it was assembling at 7 o'clock in the morning to set out from Prauthoy, it was suddenly attacked in the

rambling village of 700 inhabitants, both from the southern entry and from the west. The enemy's infantry in its surprise-attack from the south penetrated to the centre of the village before it could be arrested; it was then to some extent driven back by a bayonet charge. With tenacity the Prussians held their ground in an embittered struggle of man to man, and from house to house, which lasted fully three hours. Now there approached also, from Langres in the north, a strong hostile column on the march (Lobia's), which threatened to surround the brave Prussians with greatly superior forces. Under these circumstances Captain Kriess, their commander, determined to withdraw to his brigade, as was in fact in accordance with his orders. Only the eastern edge of the village was still open, and in that direction the Germans retired in perfect order under the cross-fire of the enemy. The vehicles of the battalion, which stood at the southern ingress of the village and which the enemy had captured at the beginning of the action, remained in his possession—Captain Kriess reached his brigade unpursued, having lost 22 killed, 77 wounded (inclusive of 5 officers) and 13 prisoners.

The French attack was made by two companies of infantry of the Line, a detachment of *Francs-tireurs*, and Lobia's Brigade (1200 men); their loss was also very considerable; their dead alone amounted to 37 men.

The numerous surprise-attacks upon the German troops occupying the lines of communication, in which the French were successful, cast a dark shade over the whole picture of the events in rear of the German armies. But any one acquainted with the history of wars knows that such attempts nearly always succeed. The troops of occupation and those in charge of the railways were distributed along the numerous lines of communication everywhere in small bodies and surrounded by a furious population, which, instigated to engage in the popular war, rendered service as reconnoiterers and spies to the *Francs-tireurs* and the roving bands of the French, supplied them with skilful guides for their expeditions, and in patriotic devotion everywhere readily lent a helping hand, or fetched forth the arms from their hiding-places, when it was intended to deliver an attack from an ambush against the numerous small and isolated detachments or patrols, or—what frequently succeeded to a very large extent—to liberate prisoners or destroy railway lines. And the French people were not for one moment deterred by the sacrifice of many hundred million francs in raising mighty armies and also in losses inflicted on their own country by the very extensive destruction of roads and railways they carried out in the districts held by the Germans. The French also readily bore the reprisals, which were the natural consequence of the popular war stimulated by them; these were the heavy money and other contributions levied upon many parishes. Such willing self-sacrifice, such a proud sense of national dignity, such ardent patriotism, which never abandoned the joyous hope of the resurrection of "*la belle France*" after the most disastrous defeats, may serve as an example to us Germans.

Many a mishap suffered by our troops of the lines of communication is explained by the circumstances here related. Surrounded by scouts and spies, uninformed about the movements of their enemies, who were often far superior numerically and always made their attacks stealthily and by surprise, and themselves entirely tied down to their station on the line of communication or the railway in their charge, there was nothing left them but to wait for the issue of events, which in a guerilla warfare

almost exclusively turn out to be surprise attacks. Let us hope that a future campaign will find us better and more thoroughly prepared for the duty of protecting the lines of railway; the arrangements of 1870/71 left much to be desired.

Wherever their numbers at all sufficed, there the German detachments in occupation of the lines of communication did not fail to go in search of the enemy, and where they did come up with *Francs-tireurs* or *Gardes Mobiles* they settled accounts with them in a very telling manner; these bands, however, could rarely be overtaken; they quitted their woods and hiding-places, as a rule, only at night, and the small bodies of armed inhabitants, which rendered the neighbourhood of their homes unsafe, understood only too well the trick of changing, according to need, the warlike dress of these "*chasseurs des Prussiens*" for the blouse of the peaceable citizen, to receive in his hospitable quarter the honest German soldier whom he had only just fired at from his ambush. It is not to be wondered at that such conduct exasperated our men and made them suspicious—and it is obvious that in self-defence in such circumstances many a reprisal was made, and death was often inflicted upon innocent people.

As for the rest, we Germans have, during the war and during the protracted "time of occupation" following thereupon, not by any means as a rule repelled the French in peaceful personal intercourse, but on the contrary we have treated them with sympathy and often with cordiality.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FLEET AND THE COAST

By ALFRED STENZEL

Post-Captain, (retired).

IN the Franco-German War our Army had the opportunity of performing great deeds, and achieving successes all but marvellous, but the position of our Navy was most unfavourable. General von Roon, the Minister of War, had been able fully to carry through the reform of the Army in accordance with the views of King William I, upon the old, tried Prussian basis, so that it stood ready to face France in grim war within the shortest possible time, and in unimagined strength; in the whole of that enormous organization not so much as a button was missing. The North German Army stood at the French frontier within the short space of a fortnight, and shoulder to shoulder with it the troops of Southern Germany, constituting a force immensely superior to that of the enemy, and still there were sufficient forces available to guard our coasts. But as Minister of the Navy,¹ the General, though proving his eminent organizing talents also in this capacity, had not yet been able to create a naval force remotely able to cope with the ancient, mighty Navy of France, the second in the world; this was owing to the fact that up to 1867 the commencements of a Prussian Navy had been on a wholly insignificant scale.

A War-Navy cannot be created in a hurry. True as it is of a war on land that it requires primarily "Money", and then again "Money", it is still more true of war on the main, which to begin with needs the building of costly ships—these sums could not possibly have been raised in sufficient amount, previous to the establishment of the North German Confederation. As yet there were no establishments in all Germany for the construction of ships-of-the-line, that is to say of iron-clads, for at that time all ship-building for war purposes was undergoing a complete transformation; the manufacture of iron plates was not so much as begun. But even if that had not been so, there would not have been time enough to construct a single man-of-war of large dimensions. Even at this present time (1895)² four or five years are required to build such a ship. The Minister of the Navy had to fall back upon purchasing or ordering ships from foreign countries, but then there was the difficulty of their armaments. The manufacture of heavy rifled guns did not commence in Germany till after the spring of

¹ The rank and functions of a German "Marine Minister" are somewhat analogous to those of our First Lord of the Admiralty, but with this enormous difference, that our First Lord is always a civilian M.P. and in the Cabinet. [*Trs.*]

² Since the above was written great progress has been made. At present, ships of the largest dimensions can be built in England in little more than two years. [*Trs.*]

1868, when in target practice against iron plates a nine-inch Armstrong gun proved at first decidedly superior to a similar weapon of Krupp's.

But the production of the *materiel* of a Navy is, comparatively, a smaller matter than that of manning the ships with trained men and, above all, with trained officers. "Un bon commandant ne s'improvise pas" ¹ is a wise saying of Admiral Jurien de la Gravière. The commanding officers of our (*i. e.* German) ships had mostly not been educated for war-service at sea, but were drawn from our mercantile navy; excellent sailors, but as yet not sufficiently possessed of that military spirit which is indispensable for independent action and impels men joyously and unhesitatingly to follow their leader; moreover, nearly all were without experience in war, and the small Prussian navy had not even yet attained to the stage of carrying out on any large scale, manœuvres which to some extent compensate for the want of that experience.

The fortifications of the coast had only begun to be built, or were being reconstructed; those that were ready were obsolete in plan and armament, and no match whatever for the guns of an iron-clad. The submarine mines—intended to bar the waterways and to keep attacking ships within range of the coast-batteries—were still in the experimental stage; useful torpedoes did not exist.

Of our present naval ports, that of Kiel had only just begun to be built. The defensive works of the forts at Friedrichsort were in the process of being re-constructed to suit the latest arrangements and modern arms. Wilhelmshaven had indeed been initiated in 1869, but was not yet available when war broke out. The old dyke leading right across the harbour channel was still there to shut off the water from the harbour basin, which consequently lay dry. Of our present dockyard with its large workshops and store-rooms not a trace was yet to be seen, and of the present town with its 17,000 inhabitants only a few houses were in existence. Ships found no supplies; there were no stores of any kind, and even of drinking water there was only just enough for the few inhabitants. The walls were still being built and not a gun was on them.

To dock large ships in our yards was impossible, and the same was also the case in the commercial ports. For other repairs also there were no arrangements whatever in Wilhelmshaven, a very few trifling ones at Kiel, and at Danzig only such as were suitable for the repairs of small vessels. In a word, all arrangements for building, maintaining and repairing the requirements of a fleet were in the initial stages.

The men of war fit for battle of the North-German Navy consisted in all of three armoured frigates ("König Wilhelm," "Friedrich Karl," and "Kronprinz") and two armoured ships ("Arminius" and "Prinz Adalbert"); these had to encounter 29 armoured ships-of-the-line, frigates, corvettes and rams on the French side, that is to say nearly 1 against 6; to these latter have yet to be added 15 armoured batteries inclusive of the formidable "Rochambeau," that was afterwards employed in the Baltic. Of unarmoured ships we had nine corvettes, four of which were under repair, against 51 French ships-of-the-line, frigates and corvettes, and two despatch-boats against 42 of the French; lastly we had for coast-defence 22 gun-boats against 101 of the French and so on. Along the whole line the strength of the French was five to six times that of the Germans. And in addition to all this the French Navy maintained an

¹ "A skilful commanding officer cannot be improvised."

exceedingly numerous fleet of transports, many times as strong as that of England; it numbered 74 large steamers, besides a dozen screw ships-of-the-line adapted to the same purpose.

Of the German Navy, the three armoured frigates and the armoured vessel "Prince Adalbert" had in the spring of 1870 been combined into a squadron under the command of the late Admiral Prince Adalbert of Prussia, in order to undertake for the first time a somewhat long evolutionary cruise. At the beginning of July it was at Plymouth and was to have proceeded to the Azores, but two of the armoured ships had been damaged. The "Friedrich Karl" had run aground in the Great Belt and



PRINCE ADALBERT OF PRUSSIA.

lost all the four blades of her screw, and as only her two spare blades could be fitted in England, her speed was reduced from 12 to 13, to 7 to 8 knots; on the "König Wilhelm" a steam cylinder cracked on warming the engines; in consequence high pressure could not be applied, so that the ship could make at most 10 instead of $14\frac{1}{2}$ knots. As the ship of smallest speed determines the speed of the whole, that of the squadron was limited to 8 knots, and, considering the great importance of speed in battle and in sailing, the efficiency of the whole squadron was largely impaired.

In our home waters there were besides the school ships, which are useless for war purposes, only four gunboats in commission. Owing to the comparative insignificance of the North German Navy there were only three corvettes on foreign stations;

the "Hertha" and the "Medusa" in Eastern Asia, and the "Arcona" in the Atlantic—in the beginning of July she lay at anchor at Horta and Fayal in the Azores; finally, the "Meteor," one of the 22 gunboats, fitted for a long voyage and provided with the necessary rigging, was in the West Indies.

On the other hand the French had in their home-waters, one evolutionary squadron of six armoured vessels etc. in commission in the Mediterranean, under Vice-Admiral Fourichou; another of 3 armoured vessels etc. in the English Channel, under the command of the Rear-Admiral Dieudonné, besides a large number of ships and vessels in their five naval ports etc. There was also an armoured corvette in the Levant, another on the way to Eastern Asia; where a permanent squadron was stationed. Then there were ships permanently stationed in the Indian Ocean, in the Pacific, in the West Indies, in South America and on the west coast of Africa. Finally, of the ships not in commission a large number were in the first reserve, that is to say, ready to be fitted for sea within 48 hours.

Such was the state of things on the coast and at sea, when the deep peace of Europe was suddenly broken by the brusque action of the French government. There can be no doubt that France picked this unprovoked quarrel under the conviction that she was sure of victory, that everything down to the minutest detail, was ready for war, and that she could fall upon North Germany with all her forces and with surprising speed. Most readily and most quickly this could be expected of her fleet, since it was five to six times as numerous as our own, and in the absence of our armoured squadron our coasts were almost wholly, and our naval ports entirely, unprotected.

In naval warfare it has not always been considered necessary to formally declare war before the commencement of hostilities; for example, the French wars against China in 1884, and against Siam in 1893; French men-of-war might similarly have entered the Jade,¹ the River Elbe etc. or Kiel at once. The entrance into the Jade seemed all the more probable, because Benedetti, the French ambassador in Berlin, had only a few weeks previously requested of our Admiralty the chart of the Jade, which during the deep peace then prevailing was supplied him without hesitation; in fact it could be had of any bookseller. It was well known that in case of war a landing on a large scale on our coasts was fully intended. Vice-Admiral Count Bouët-Willaumez, who had acquired extensive experience in the landing of troops at Eupatoria in the Crimean war, had, in the spring of 1867 and during the Luxemburg troubles, elaborated to the minutest detail a scheme for landing a corps of 40,000 men on our Baltic coast, and the large fleet of transports was kept ready for that very purpose.

If such an expedition was duly prepared, then within a few days after the order was given a hostile Army Corps could be landed anywhere on our coast, or better still on the coast of Jutland, in order then, jointly with a Danish Army of about 40,000 men—for the Danes were eagerly waiting for the signal to strike—to advance upon Kiel and Hamburg, and at the same time an insurrection in favour of the deposed Guelf dynasty was expected in Hannover. A rapid and resolute aggression of a French fleet with a Landing Corps would alarm our whole coast, greatly injure our ports and

¹ A bay in Oldenburg. [*Trs.*]

maritime provinces, interfere with the mobilization of troops, retain large bodies of men on our coasts and very injuriously affect the war on our western frontier. This danger was obvious to all.

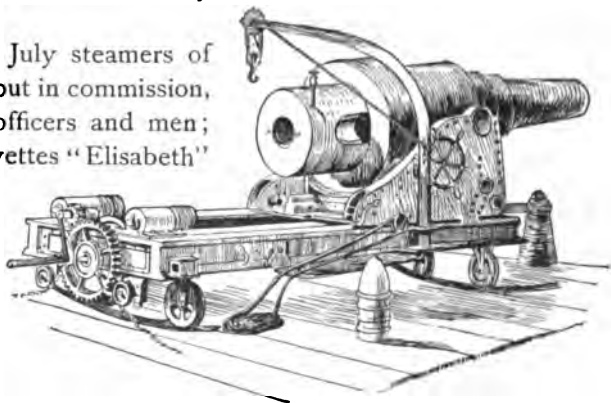
To meet it Germany did all that was humanly possible. It was a fortunate chance that just then the divided responsibility in our naval administration and commands, which is detrimental to rapid action, was temporarily set aside. Perfect coöperation of all the branches of the service is indispensable for speedy preparation for war. Vice-Admiral Jachmann, in his capacity of Director of the Admiralty, under General von Roon, was the very soul of our naval administration. During the absence of Prince Adalbert he was, as his representative, charged also with the Chief Command of the navy, and in this double capacity he made all arrangements with energy and circumspection. The naval officers and civilians now were at work in the *same* room and at the *same* table, and thus a saving of several days was effected.

On the 10th of July Prince Adalbert had started from Plymouth on his intended voyage to the Azores, but, in consequence of the uncertainty of the political situation, cautiously kept up his communication with land; on the 13th he received orders to return home, and in the evening of the 16th he arrived at Wilhelmshaven on the Jade.

During the afternoon of the previous day His Majesty King William I had returned to Berlin from Ems. Whilst still on the way he had given orders for mobilization. In the evening Generals von Roon, von Moltke, and Admiral Jachmann issued from the War Office the requisite orders to the Army and to the Navy; to the naval ports on the Elbe and on the Weser instructions were forwarded to take up the buoys etc. so as to deprive the enemy of guidance in entering port.

At Kiel, Wilhelmshaven, and Cuxhaven temporary batteries were improvised, and armed with guns brought up for the purpose; magazines were formed for ammunition, and rooms were built for the men; all coast fortifications in charge of the Army were made ready for action. All the exposed waterways were barred with submarine mines hastily constructed, and also with cables, chains, booms etc. Jointly with the Great General Staff an uninterrupted chain of stations of observations was formed along the whole coast from Borkum¹ to Memel,² and connected with the telegraphic system of the interior. All these works were carried out promptly and skilfully with such zeal that the arrangements necessary to meet all contingencies were completed in a time which seemed to the enemy incredibly short.

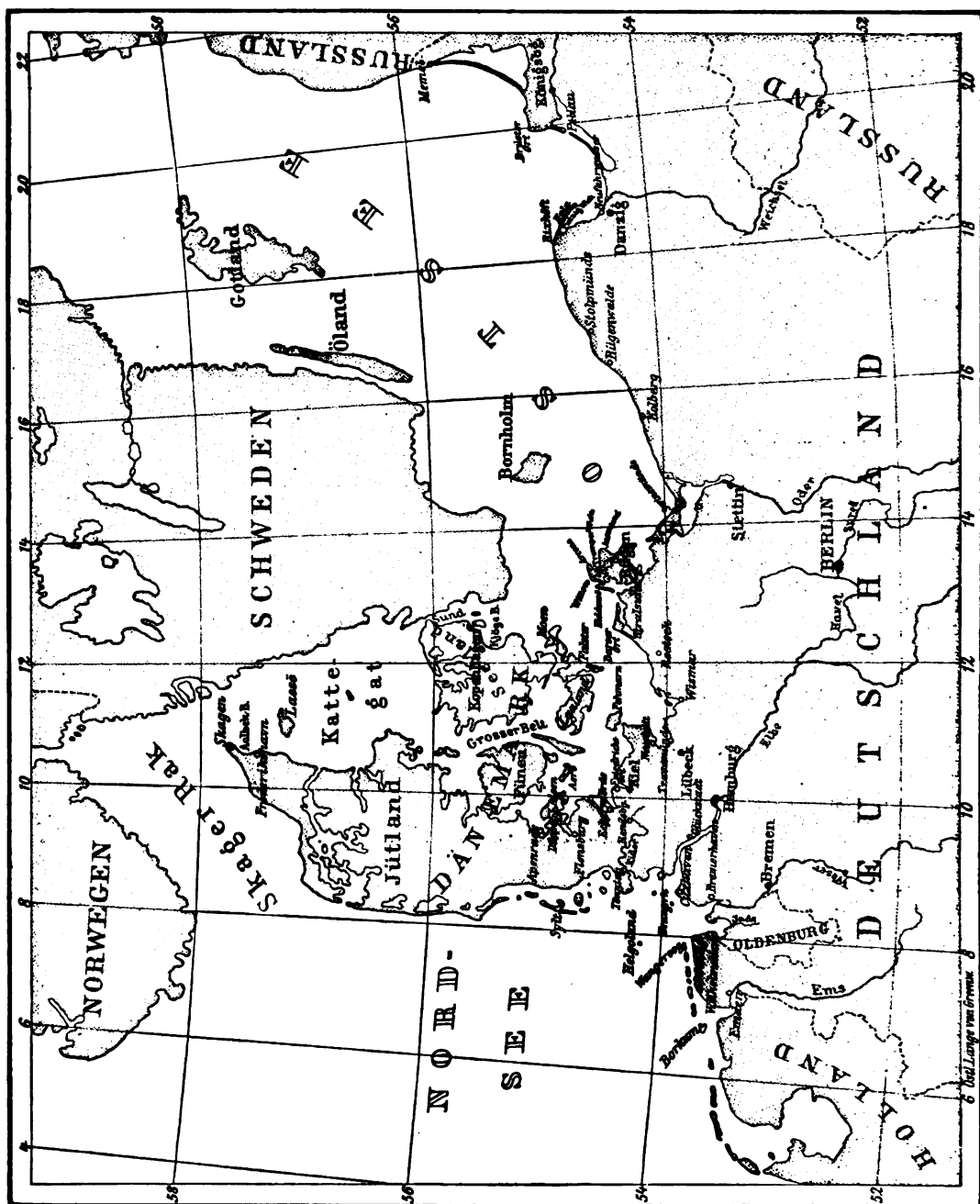
From the 17th to the 24th of July steamers of various sizes serviceable for war were put in commission, as many as could be manned with officers and men; viz., the monitor "Arminius", the corvettes "Elisabeth" and "Nymphe", 17 1st and 2nd class gun-boats and two despatch-boats. The corvette "Vineta" being under repair, and the sailing vessels



KRUPP MONSTER-GUN FOR COAST DEFENCE.

¹ Borkum, the westernmost extremity of the German coast bordering on Holland; and Memel, the easternmost point touching Russia. [*Trs.*]

laid up in ordinary, were on the 18th of July taken in tow and removed from Kiel to Swinemünde for safety—proof positive that the protection of the harbour of Kiel was



THE GERMAN COASTS.

at that time considered wholly inadequate. To increase our small maritime forces an appeal was made to the seafaring population to form a volunteer naval force for the protection of the coast.

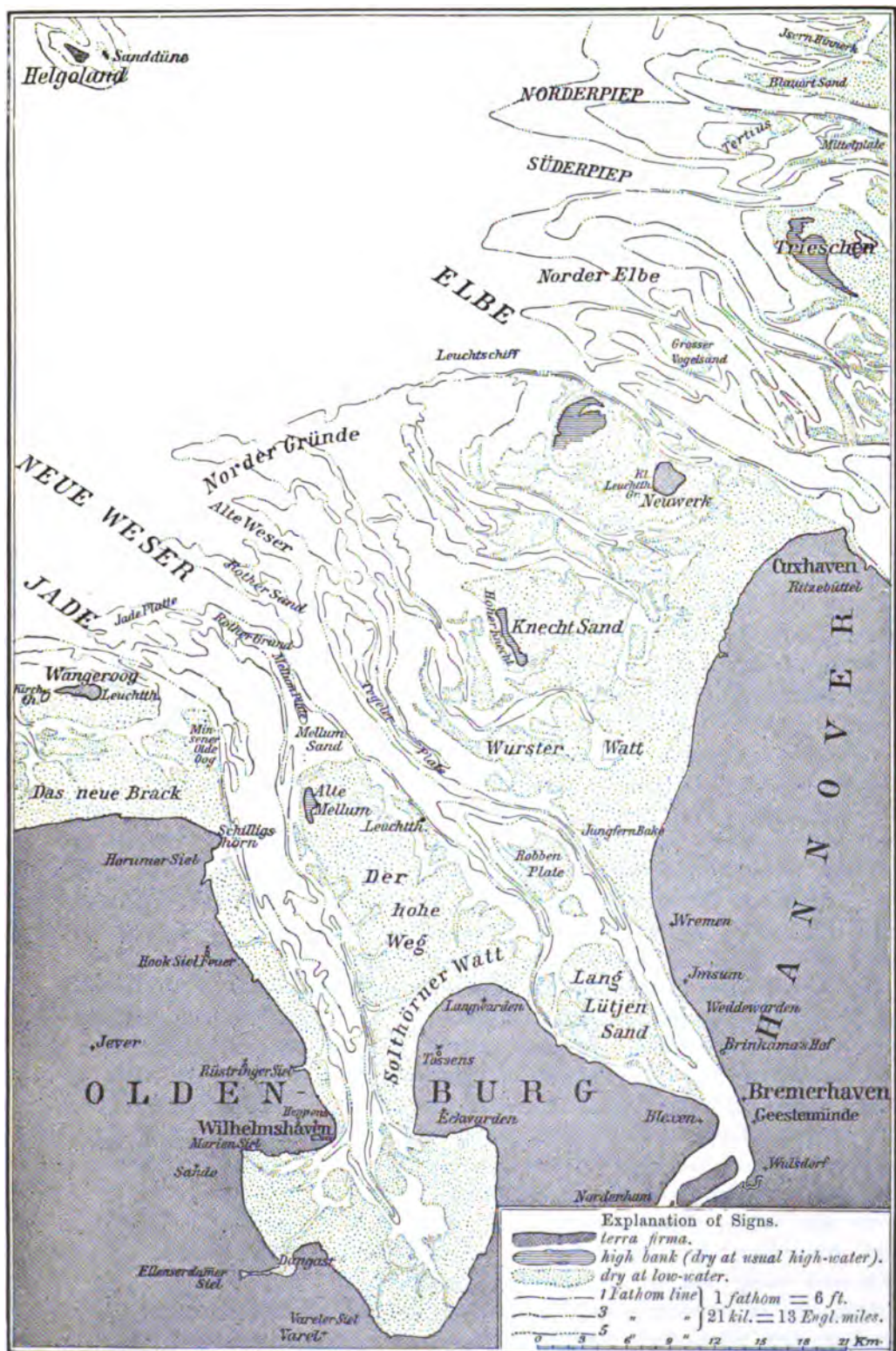


CHART OF THE JADE, THE WESER, AND THE ELBE ESTUARIES.

Together with the mobilization Admiral Jachmann had planned the distribution of our naval forces along the coast, as follows: The three armoured frigates, with the swift Royal yacht "Grille" to do duty as despatch-boat, and five gun-boats to be stationed in the Outer Jade on the Schillig roads, to cover this waterway as well as Wilhelmshaven, the most important and at the same time the most exposed point of attack in the German Ocean. This position is not easily assailable, because the water-way of the Jade extends first from the sea north of the island of Wangeroog, then travels in a south-east direction for a distance of seven nautical miles between shallows, and is narrow and only just deep enough for armoured frigates, and then it bends sharply round to the south, almost at right angles, expands to the Schillig roads, which are two miles broad and five miles long. The attacking fleet would therefore have to slowly proceed through this long passage in single line (ship behind ship), and the leading vessels would meanwhile be exposed to a cross-fire and after emerging from this passage to the simultaneous attack of several ships of the defenders.

The three armoured frigates were appointed for this purpose; the small despatch-boat would reconnoitre, the gun-boats would do outpost duty and in case of an armed attack defend the bar. Owing to the width of the bay and its complicated system of currents the only bar possible was by submarine mines. It was intended to place these above the Schillig roads, near the Geniusbank, which divides the waterway into two comparatively small arms. The position at Schillig offers the further advantage that an enemy forcing his way up the Weser, Elbe, or Eider is taken in the flank. A squadron stationed there also protects those waterways indirectly.

To defend the mouth of the Weser, which was close by and has not depth enough for heavy vessels as far as Bremerhaven, only four gun-boats were told off, although the defensive land-works were still unfinished; on the other hand, for the mouth of the Elbe, whose deep water reaches a long way inland, and whose shore defences were also either unfinished or insufficiently armed, the two armoured vessels "Arminius" and "Prinz Adalbert" together with three gun-boats were told off. Higher up, near Grauerort, some merchantmen were held in readiness to be sunk so as to block the narrow waterway there. Finally, two gunboats were to watch the Ems and operate against the enemy's line of communication from Cherbourg to Heligoland. For the defence of the Eider etc. there was no force available.

For the defence of the Jade the corvette "Elisabeth" was also available; she was then a new, swift cruiser, admirably armed, and scarcely inferior in efficiency to any vessel of the French navy. She was ordered to proceed to the Atlantic with utmost speed, to protect our merchantmen and to injure the enemy's maritime trade. The German government had declared private property at sea to be inviolable—although France did not follow suit—nevertheless it did seem important to hinder the supply of munitions of war. We had two more swift cruisers, the "Augusta" and the "Victoria," but they were undergoing repairs at Danzig.

In the Baltic, there were for Kiel, in addition to the 2nd despatch-boat for reconnoitring duty, four gun-boats charged with the defence of the bar of the harbour, which was being steadily strengthened, as being, in conjunction with the batteries on shore, the most effective object. For further protection of the same, an old ship-of-the-line, the "Renown", bought in England to serve as a drill-ship, and lately arrived at Kiel, was hastily and only scantily armed and anchored off Friedrichsort.

Finally, there were to be stationed in the narrow waters of Rügen, near Stralsund, two gun-boats, and at Danzig the small corvette "Nymphe."

This plan was adopted by His Majesty in its entirety. Its execution depended on the passage between the German Ocean and the Baltic remaining open; it had therefore to be carried out without delay.

Thus our small naval forces were distributed over the whole distance from the mouth of the Ems to Danzig, so as not to leave the long expanse of our coast unprotected. To meet vastly superior forces of the enemy in open attack was considered so entirely out of the question that Admiral Prince Adalbert joined the Headquarters of the First Army in the field; Rear-Admiral Heldt, the Commander-in-Chief at Kiel, assumed command over the forces in the Baltic, and Vice-Admiral Jachman over the forces in the German Ocean. The post of the latter as Director of the Admiralty, and the temporary Chief-Command of the Navy was entrusted on the 19th of July to our last Admiral available, who was on sick-leave, but, though still ailing, had shortened his leave and reported himself ready for duty. The utterly unprepared state of our Navy would have required a resolute man, able and willing at the sudden outbreak of so great a war, to utilize to the utmost all our resources; but after the departure of General von Roon, who had joined the army, there set in a want of initiative and a general rejection of proposals made by third parties, which affected the fleet most injuriously.

At the same time a change was made in the plan of the distribution of the ships, a small flotilla having been formed at Rügen, under the command of Commander Count Waldersee; it consisted of the despatch-boat "Grille" originally intended for the Jade, and three gun-boats, instead of the two previously provided for. Other proposed changes were afterwards relinquished, so that the original plan was on the whole adhered to.

Of troops there were at first, besides the battalion of Marines and the section of Naval Artillery, the four mobilized Army Corps of the maritime provinces; and, when these were sent off to the French frontier, there were available from the 28th of July onwards the 17th Division in Schleswig-Holstein, three Landwehr Divisions, and about 90,000 men, garrison and dépôt troops, which were commanded by General Vogel von Falkenstein, the Governor-General of the maritime provinces.

To carry out the planned distribution of the fleet, three gun-boats steamed on the 24th of July out of Kiel, through the Great Belt, to the German Ocean, and on the 27th these were followed by the "Arminius" and the "Elisabeth." News now arrived that a French squadron of iron-clads had left Cherbourg and had passed Dover on the 25th at noon. Our squadron in the Jade expected an attack, which, however, was not delivered. On the contrary the French steered right across the German Ocean upon Skagen, thus depriving the German ships of the road from the German Ocean to the Baltic.

The three gun-boats had meanwhile passed the Skager Rack, but the "Arminius" and the "Elisabeth" were still in Danish waters of the Baltic. The latter, which had left Kiel somewhat later, was overtaken by the order to return, and came back; but on the 28th of July at noon the "Arminius" was off the small island of Hirtsholm, near Fredrikshavn (Jutland), when she sighted the enemy's squadron of iron-clads making straight for her. The French Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Bouët-Willaumez, immediately despatched three of his iron-clads and a swift cruiser in pursuit,

but the commanding officer of the "Arminius," Commander Livonius, succeeded by skilful use of local opportunities, in eluding them and escaping. He steered across to and along the Swedish coast,—and arrived unattacked in the Skager Rack, and thence on the 31st of July at night in the Elbe, his place of destination. This disappointment, together with the confused orders he had received from his own government, seems to have greatly annoyed the French Admiral.

The idea of sending the corvette "Elisabeth" to the German Ocean was given up; but to despatch the gun-boats still wanting there, the Eider canal was put in requisition. It really only allowed the passage of second-class gun-boats, but by means of enlarging the locks, which required no small amount of labour, they succeeded in passing through first-class gun-boats. Now it was possible by the

beginning of August to carry out the distribution of the ships etc. according to the original plan, barring, however, the few alterations indicated above. In the German Ocean the "Arminius" was removed to the Jade, to serve as support to the gun-boats on reconnoitring duty, and the idea of stationing special gun-boats in the Weser was abandoned, because these five were not sufficient for the daily reconnoitring service and the exhausting outpost-duties, and moreover, gun-boats had continually to be sent to the Weser to fetch supplies etc.

Owing to the unready state of our Navy in the German Ocean our squadron in the Outer Jade was in a peculiar and difficult position. Regular postal communication had to be kept up with its nominal base, Wilhemshaven, which was at a distance of 16 nautical miles from its place of anchorage, and telegraphic communication had to be kept up with



VICE-ADMIRAL JACHMANN.

Schillig, 4 nautical miles off. Wilhelmshaven did not afford to the squadron any resources or means whatever, and all requirements, such as coals, provisions, and even water had to be fetched from Bremerhaven, which was 25 nautical miles off. There a small naval depôt had been formed, and all repairs had to be made. Winds, tides, currents and fogs were often adverse, so that the traffic required a number of tugs and flat barges. On the Schillig roads the large ships lay safe at anchor, but the smaller vessels were often ill at ease, and the small steamers etc. were not infrequently compelled to seek shelter from wind and waves.

Moreover, Admiral Jachmann had not a single despatch-boat at his disposal, the "Grille" having been retained in the Baltic; gun-boats with a speed of only 6 or 7 knots in smooth water were much too slow for reconnoitring service. For this purpose swift merchant steamers had to be chartered; to enable them to discharge their duty

properly they ought to have flown the war-flag and been supplied with some armament, but however ready the Commander of the squadron was to assume heavy responsibility, yet this exceeded his authority too far. By other and more effectual means our forces might have been strengthened, if the central authorities had not all through declined all proposals and left it to the Admiral in the Outer Jade to act on his own sole responsibility.

To keep watch over the coast of the German Ocean was no easy task for the squadron.

Whilst Admiral Jachmann from day to day expected to be attacked with great vigour and was resolved to sell his life dearly, being aware that hardly a vessel on our side would be left to tell the tale, week after week went by, and not a ship of the enemy was seen along the whole coast. On the 28th of July the French Admiral Bouët-Villaumez had cast anchor at Aalbeck bay (south of Skagen) and remained there several days quite inactive. This was evidence enough that a systematic and energetic conduct of the naval war was not to be expected of the French, but the report of their hopeless ineptitude in that respect did not reach Germany till much later.

Admiral Rigault de Genouilly, the French First Lord of the Admiralty, a man of high repute, who had already held his eminent post for 4½ years, had had the courage, rare in those days, of declaring in the cabinet council, that the navy was not ready for war; nevertheless in the conduct of the war he fell far short of what might have been expected of him. He was ambitious enough to desire to command the fleet himself in carrying out the great plan of landing troops on our coast, without, however, resigning his position at the head of the Admiralty, and he placed Admiral Bouët-Villaumez at the head of the fleet very reluctantly, and solely because the Emperor Napoleon himself desired it. The troops to be landed were to be put under the Command of General Trochu. Although these two officers had long been selected for their posts, yet they were not informed of it till the 22nd and 23rd of July.

Bouët-Villaumez immediately set out from Paris to Cherbourg and hoisted his flag on the armoured frigate "Surveillante", but he found everything in the greatest confusion: stores insufficient, complements of men not full; his squadron contained only 7 iron-clads instead of the 14 iron-clads promised him, and so on. His iron-clads consisted of three of the Channel squadron, and four new ones put in commission—and he had only one despatch-boat. Instead of the 30,000 landing troops promised for Cherbourg, there were only 10,000 at hand. Nevertheless he went to sea, anxious to destroy the German squadron, which he believed to be still in the Channel when it had already been a whole week in harbour in the Jade; (such was the efficiency of their Intelligence Department). A second strong squadron with the large fleet of transports and the landing troops was to follow speedily, under the command of Vice-Admiral La Roncière le Noury.

The orders issued to Admiral Bouët-Villaumez were well calculated to perplex him. He was to make straight for the Sound and thence send a ship to Copenhagen; afterwards return at *night* to the Jade (a distance of 420 nautical miles!) and blockade it; finally, after the reinforcements, despatched meanwhile, should have arrived, he was to leave a Division at the Jade and proceed to the Baltic with the bulk of his forces—a mere sailing to and fro without any obvious aim or warlike purpose.

The French government had sent the Duke of Cadore as ambassador extraordinary

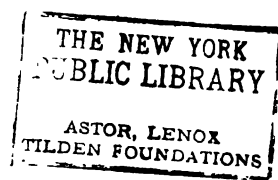
to Copenhagen—but not till the 23rd of July—to induce Denmark to take part in the war. The Duke was accompanied by a naval officer who was to make the necessary arrangements for the accommodation of the fleet. The Danes were at the highest pitch of excitement and in favour of the French alliance: they greeted the French tricolour with shouts of joy, sang the Marseillaise, and the Danish press stimulated the people to fury against Germany. A collection was made for the French wounded, which speedily rose to a high figure. The Danish government favoured the French in direct violation of the laws of neutrality, not only by allowing them to enlist native pilots, but by consenting to their making use of the bay of Kjöge near Copenhagen for revictualling, and even of utilizing the Danish signal-stations for signalling with their own code. But the King hung back—there were wanting the French landing troops.

The Duke of Cadore first sent the naval officer attached to his mission from Copenhagen to Admiral Bouët-Villaumez in the bay of Aalbeck; he then came himself and begged and entreated the Admiral to take his squadron to Copenhagen, for then the King would not be able to hesitate any longer, his hands would be forced, but it was all in vain. The Admiral spoke of his orders, from which he could not depart; but at last he yielded so far that he did disobey his orders by not sailing to the Jade, but, so to speak, stopped half way and remained inactive five days in the bay of Aalbeck. There he received the enigmatical order “to keep a good look-out on the Jade, to seek a suitable point of observation for watching the 200 miles (l) of the German coast” etc. Finally, on the 2nd of August he was ordered by telegraph to proceed to the Baltic.

He weighed anchor immediately and entered on the “dangerous” voyage through the Great Belt. On the 6th of August Admiral Bouët-Villaumez appeared off Kiel, but turned away to the east without firing a shot, or even declaring the blockade, and sailed along the coast to “study” it. From Rügen he sheered off to the Kjöge bay, where everything had meanwhile been prepared; he replenished his stores of provisions, refilled his bunkers, and on the 12th of August appointed a commission consisting of one of his Admirals and several officers selected by lot, to study the spots on our Baltic coast which are most convenient to effect a landing. This aimless groping in the dark characterized the French naval warfare in the Baltic; and precisely the same method was followed in the German Ocean. The idea of effecting a landing had been wholly given up by that time; the 10,000 men assembled in Cherbourg had been wanted elsewhere as far back as the end of July; however, this we did not know till later on.

Our squadron in the Outer Jade had been waiting for weeks for the appearance of the French fleet. Two gun-boats lay constantly on the Wangeroog waterway on outpost duty; by them and from the stations of observation on all the lighthouses the sea was incessantly watched from the land. And, besides, there were made daily reconnaissances from the Jade and the Elbe to Heligoland and towards the west, but not an enemy's ship was to be seen, although the whole French navy had meanwhile been put in commission.

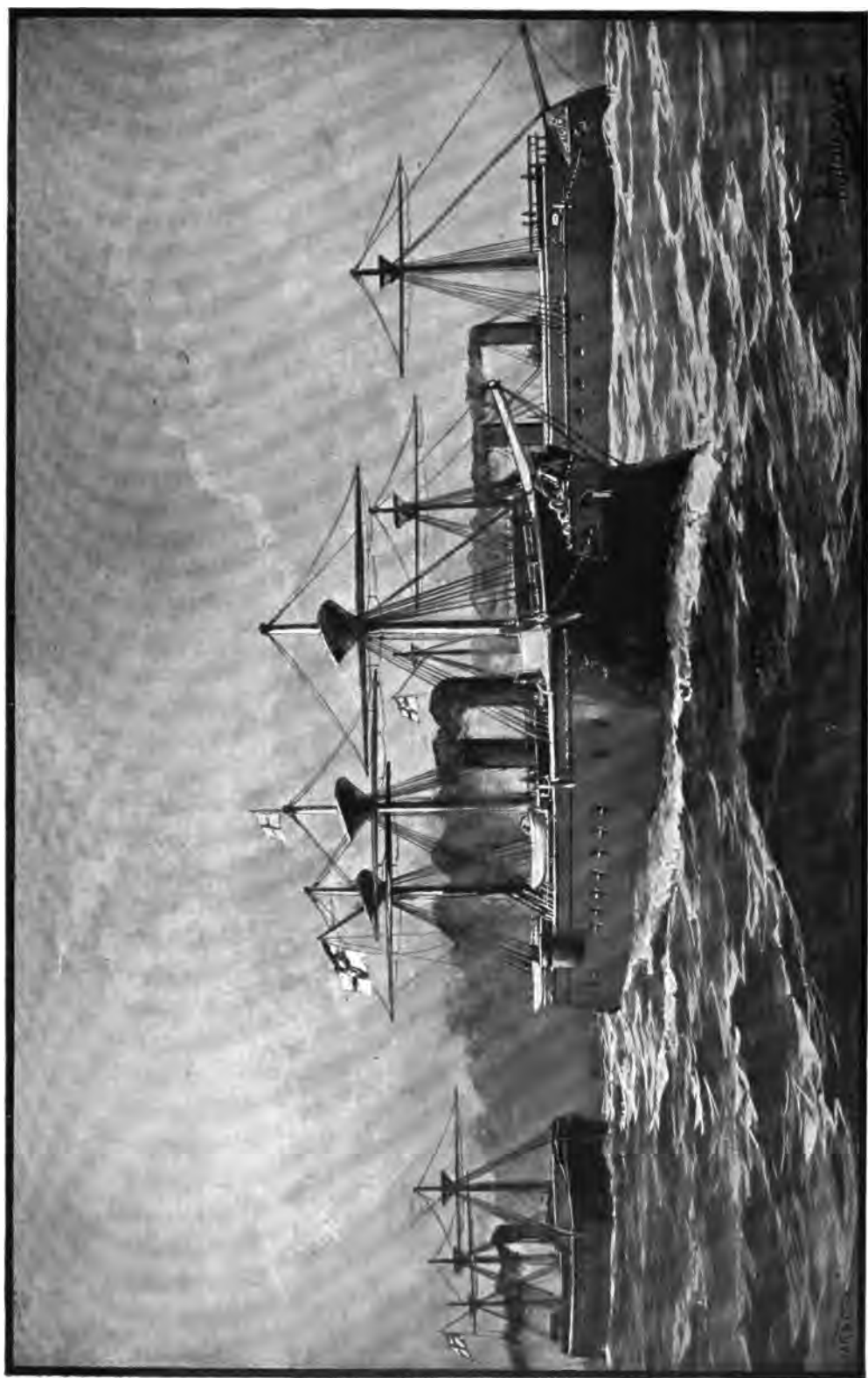
When on the 4th of August news arrived at the Jade, that at noon of the preceding day a French iron-clad had been seen to pass through the straits of Dover on the way to the German Ocean, Admiral Jachmann went on the 5th of August with his three iron-clads in search of the Frenchman; he steered north-north-west as far as 56° N. along the track which ships sailing from the Channel to Skagen are wont to





FRENCH FLEET.

[face German Fleet, back to face p. 578.

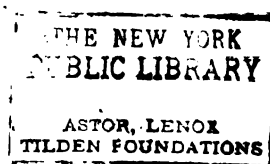


Friedrich-Karl.

König Wilhelm.
GERMAN FLEET.

Kronprinz.

[face French Fleet.



follow; he then took a south-west direction, this being the probable whereabouts of the enemy's ship; however, his search was fruitless, and on the 7th he returned to the Jade. At last on the evening of the 11th report arrived from Cuxhaven, that a French squadron of iron-clads had arrived off Heligoland; it was the Mediterranean squadron, commanded by Vice-Admiral Fourichon, and reinforced on the way.

This detachment, consisting originally of six iron-clads and a despatch-boat, was stationed at Oran in Algiers, and did not receive orders to proceed to Brest before the 19th of July; the armoured corvette "Montcalm" was detached and sent off to the Azores, to watch our unarmoured corvette "Arcona" in those waters. With his remaining ships the Admiral sailed from Brest to the German Ocean, and on the 8th of August, passing Cherbourg, he was joined by some more ships. Thus he arrived at Heligoland with 7 armoured frigates, one armoured corvette and some swift cruisers.

That was what Jachmann had been waiting for. On the following morning he wanted to attack the French fleet in spite of its great superiority, as he had on the 17th of March, 1864, seized the first opportunity to attack at Jasmund a fleet of the Danes that was four times as powerful as his own and was blockading the "Bay of Stettin." It is true that it would not have been possible on this occasion to have made a running fight of it, in the same way as had been done at Jasmund; to do this he would have needed to be equal in speed to the enemy, whilst the speed of the "König Wilhelm" and the "Friedrich Karl" was reduced by the damage they had suffered. It meant a decisive combat on the spot.

The "König Wilhelm" was both offensively and defensively, and in manœuvring capacity, superior to every one of the enemy's ships, but for all that it was, according to all human calculation, impossible to expect victory, considering the threefold superiority of the enemy, and that the French had resolved on sinking the German flag-ship by ramming. However, even if the two slower vessels had been lost, the French squadron would have been so crippled that it could not have undertaken any thing against our coast, and would have had to return home.

In forming an opinion on this hazardous manœuvre it must be taken into consideration that since the middle of July the position of affairs had undergone a great change. Then it was confidently expected that the mighty French navy would fall with overwhelming force upon our defenceless coasts, that a landing on a large scale would be effected, and that our first line of defence would be our small flotilla of iron-clads. The issue of the contests on our western frontier was problematical, a French inroad on South Germany seemed probable—and early successes of our enemy would surely have brought him allies both on the coast and in the interior.¹ But this danger was averted by the victories of Weissenburg, Wörth, and Spicheren; one French army was broken into fragments, the other was in full retreat, a hostile landing was out of the question, our coast defences, and bars of our waterways were far advanced, the coast flotillas in the Jade, Elbe and Kiel fords, and the spar torpedo-boats so reinforced and efficient, that it would have cost the enemy a hard struggle to capture even a single one of our ports. And—last not least—the indecision and feebleness of French naval warfare had already become so evident by the behaviour of Admiral Bouët-Villaumez' squadron, that our ports, even *without* our iron-clads

¹ Viz., Denmark and Austria. [*Trs.*]

had no occasion to dread hostile action. Admiral Jachmann was justified then in desiring to engage a force so greatly superior; indeed he thought it was incumbent on him to enter into an open conflict with the hostile fleet assembled at Heligoland, ere he conceded to it preponderance in our waters and the power to interfere with our maritime trade.

But he had reckoned without his subordinate Commanders. On the morning of the 12th of August he informed them of his intention, and laid before them his plan of battle (decks were cleared, and all was ready for fight), but the commanders took counsel and remonstrated.

An officer in command of a ship rules independently, especially during battle, where orders (by signal) can rarely be given or understood. With reluctant commanders Jachmann could not venture on a bold enterprise, such as he had contemplated; it required the unanimous, hearty coöperation of all. With a heavy heart he gave way



THE "ARMINIUS" AT SEA.

and abandoned his plan. This occurrence subsequently paralyzed the work of our squadron in the German Ocean.

Admiral Fourichon now remained unchallenged off Heligoland. Colonel Maxse, the English governor of the island, had been an old comrade in arms of the French officers from the time of the Crimean war, and rendered them what service he could: *e.g.*, on the 13th of August he obliged the Admiral by sending the English gun-boat "Rainbow" stationed at the island, to the Elbe to deliver the French declaration of the blockade of our coasts in the German Ocean to our foremost vessel on out-post duty at the mouth of the river. He allowed French troop-ships to be at anchor under the lee of the land, but, on the other hand, with respect to the French men-of-war, he observed the laws of neutrality by keeping them—as far as is known—outside the limits of the English sovereign rights.

During daytime the French warships as a rule remained at anchor near

Heligoland, at night they withdrew to the open sea. Occasionally single ships approached near the Jade or the Elbe, but always only just near enough to be seen on the offing, when the weather was clear. Neither then nor at any other time during the whole war did they attempt taking action of any kind; on the contrary they frequently evaded it. For example, on the 24th of August, the "Arminius" was sent to reconnoitre, and when far out at sea, she met two French war-ships and challenged them by firing at them, but they declined the contest. The Paris papers asserted that their navy had challenged our squadron, but this was one of their not uncommon baseless vauntings. The only shot fired by the French in the German Ocean was by one of their swift cruisers, which chased unsuccessfully an unarmed merchant steamer that had been employed as a despatch-boat on reconnoitring service and had ventured too near the squadron at Heligoland.

The grounds of the total abstention from warlike operations by both the French Admirals Fourichon and Bouët-Villaumez must be looked for partly in the composition of their squadron, which certainly might have been better adapted for aggressive operations against coasts, but mainly in the mistaken views in French naval circles about the principles of maritime warfare. This is proved by their repeated assertion that the strong squadrons of iron-clads had been unable to produce any effect on our shores. And yet only a few years previously, in the American War of Secession, the fleet of the N. States had proved the contrary in their naval attacks on the coasts of the S. States.

In the Jade and in the mouth of the Elbe the German gun-boats ¹ relieved each

¹ Readers who are uninitiated in naval matters, may welcome the following explanations: An "Ironclad" is a ship whose most important parts (engines, waterline, guns, steerage and commanders' posts) are rendered invulnerable by armour, principally against explosive shells, and being thus fitted to be ranged in the line of battle, it corresponds to the "ship-of-the-line" of former days. A cruiser of middle size was called a "corvette" down to 1870; she was an unarmoured swift ship, appointed to sail in all oceans to protect commerce and capture the enemy's merchantmen. A "decked corvette" (with a deck over the gun-deck, so that the guns stood under cover) corresponded to a modern second-class cruiser. A flush-decked corvette (without a deck over the guns, which were exposed accordingly) corresponded to a modern third-class cruiser. The "Arcona," "Elisabeth" and "Hertha" were "decked corvettes"; the "Augusta" and "Medusa" were flush-decked corvettes. A certain kind of smaller armoured ships, destined for service abroad, but also available for the battle line, the French used to call "armoured corvettes," corresponding to the modern armoured cruisers. Small, swift, and lightly armed ships or vessels fitted for reconnoitring, and for service in the Intelligence Department were and still are called despatch-boats. The difference between "ship" and "vessel" is still undetermined. By "vessels" generally are meant smaller craft, only fitted for coasting service, like the coasting vessels of the mercantile navy and the gun-boats of the war-navy; the word "ships" designates larger craft, built for distant voyages. It may happen, however, that "vessels" of the mercantile navy, or of the war-navy cross the ocean, as was done, for example, by the gun-boat "Meteor." The term "armoured vessels" was and still is occasionally applied to larger armoured craft which are not fit for the line of battle and are destined only for coast defence in the narrower sense of the word (defence of harbour or waterway). Smaller armoured craft of this kind are called armoured gun-boats. To the former kind belonged in 1870 the "Arminius" and the "Prinz Adalbert." The term gun-boat indicates as a rule a small craft carrying one or a small number of guns which are heavy in proportion to the size of the ship, and whose sea-going capacity is accordingly restricted to coast navigation. Such were in 1870 our first- and second-class gun-boats. Some first-class gun-boats, like the "Meteor," were more fully rigged for more distant voyages; nevertheless they were but of limited sea-going capacity. [This nomenclature does not hold good for English ships. (*Trs.*)]

other day by day in doing outpost duty, and swift steamers were sent out reconnoitring, frequently escorted by the *Arminius*; the two gun-boats stationed in the Ems also ventured out when the weather was favourable, in the hope of encountering a troopship; a hope, however, doomed to disappointment. In Wilhelmshaven men were hard at work in completing the batteries etc. and in making the harbour and the dry-docks fit for use, and in erecting small temporary workshops. Admiral Jachmann found it necessary to superintend personally the piercing of the old sea-dyke, that closed the harbour channel and prevented the admission of the water into the harbour-basin. For this purpose he had to go to Wilhelmshaven and personally superintend the work. It thus became possible to dock our ships, to clean their bottoms etc., all of which had become urgently necessary.

On the River Weser, Fort Brinkamahof was prepared for war contingencies during the month of August, and Langlütjensand was pushed well forward; and the same thing was done for the shore batteries on the Elbe. The five Divisions of soldiers of the line and of the Landwehr which had been retained for coast-defence, were despatched partly in the beginning and partly in the middle of the month to the theatre of war in France, and their place was taken by several battalions of the Landwehr.

At the end of August stormy weather set in, westerly winds prevailing for some time. This we surmised could not but greatly incommode the French ships at Heligoland, make it difficult for them to replenish their coal-bunkers and stores, and here and there inflict some damage; and subsequent reports proved the correctness of our conjectures. On the basis of this calculation, Admiral Jachmann resolved, as soon as the weather should have improved, to attack the enemy at all costs. On the afternoon of the 11th of September he steamed out with his three iron-clads, and being determined this time to venture all, he took the "*Arminius*" with him; however, the sea was still too rough and she had to be sent back. With his three iron-clads he continued his voyage to Heligoland, but on arrival he found that his bird had flown. In the morning of the same day, Fourichon, who had long been left without news from home, but had probably learnt the issue of the battle of Sedan and had foreseen his appointment to the post of First Lord of the Admiralty in the Government of the National Defence, had quitted his post and departed with the whole of his squadron for Cherbourg. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon the last French ship was sinking below the horizon in the north-east just as the first German ship hove in sight in the south! Bitterly disappointed, our squadron returned on the morrow to the Jade.

Thus was raised the blockade of our coasts on the German Ocean.

In the Baltic the commission summoned by Admiral Bouët-Villaumez on the 12th of August in the Kjöge-bay arrived at the conclusion that only two fortified towns on our coast were assailable, viz., Kolberg and Danzig, and even those only from a great distance, and that an attack without troops to land was entirely useless. We will not refute this allegation in detail, but only remark in general that all the German ports in the Baltic of any importance were at that time either not fortified at all, or hastily and scantily fortified when war broke out; all the others, with the exception of Kiel, were defended by obsolete forts and arms, and could have been effectually bombarded by large ships.

Even Kolberg and Danzig remained unmolested. Three several times Admiral

Bouet-Villaumez had determined to bombard Kolberg, but it never came about; once indeed for a reason which does great honour to the Admiral's humane feelings — he scrupled to disturb the health-seeking visitors of that favourite sea-side resort, who were promenading on the beach etc. On the 16th of August after his return from the Great Belt, whither he had been called by a false alarm, he limited himself to breaking up his squadron into two Divisions, instructing one to enforce the blockade, now at last declared, of our coast from Kiel to Rügen, whilst he himself undertook the same duty for the coast from Stettin to Memel. It, however, never became effective; according to the law of nations it had never existed and was without validity for neutrals.

On his way from the Great Belt to the east Bouët-Villaumez at noon of the 19th of August fell in between Falster and Rügen with the "Grille". She, being out reconnoitring, had sighted at Wittow (Rügen) the French yacht "Jerome Napoleon" and was chasing her in a south-west direction. The Admiral first sent the armoured corvette "Jeanne d'Arc" and the 1st class despatch-boat "L'Hermite" against the "Grille"; she immediately withdrew to Wittow, and now when our three gun-boats came out to the assistance of their leading boat, he advanced with his whole Division against the little flotilla. Against the long range of the guns on the French iron-clads ours were quite powerless, accordingly our ships retired, quite unharmed, into the shallow inner waters of Rügen. The Admiral now continued his voyage to the east, but left the "Jeanne d'Arc" behind to watch the flotilla of German gun-boats. The event was thus of no importance whatever, but the consequence was that the discovery of this "nest of gunboats" made Count Bouët-Villaumez still more nervous than, according to French reports, he had previously been.

To this had yet to be added another occurrence, which in itself was insignificant. Five days afterwards, viz. on the 22nd of August, the Admiral entered the bay of Danzig with his whole division and anchored within the peninsula of Hela, in the well-sheltered Putziger Wiek. Captain Johannes Weickhmann, Commandant of the small corvette "Nymphe", lying in Neufahrwasser, determined to take advantage of this opportunity to insult the enemy. At midnight he had the bar at the mouth of the Vistula removed, put out all the lights, and ran along the coast up to the French fleet. He succeeded in approaching it unobserved to within 2000 yards, and then fired two broadsides against the nearest ironclad, which happened to be the "Sur-



CORVETTE-CAPTAIN JOHANNES WEICKHMANN.

veillante", Bouët's flagship, whereupon naturally the whole French fleet was astir. The fire was replied to, the watchship "Thetis" promptly slipped her cable and within a few minutes set off in pursuit. The "Nymphe", however, got off unharmed and reached port at 3 o'clock in the morning. After this new misadventure officers and men were thoroughly "disheartened" according to the account of a French reporter, who accompanied the Admiral.

Bouët's squadron was further reinforced by the "Rochambeau" (formerly "Dunderberg"), a mighty



NORTH-GERMAN NAVY. OFFICER.

engine built in the United States, of enormous offensive and defensive power and of the proportionately shallow draught of 21.3 ft., and therefore well fitted for attack on coast-fortifications. Rigault de Genouilly, the Minister of State, reprimanded the Admiral for his inactivity, and the Government of National Defence, instituted after the fall of the Empire, ordered him to do the enemy all the harm possible.

Now at last, about the middle of September, he determined to bombard Kolberg, but when Bouët-Villaumez on his way there, anchored in the Tromper

Wiek (Rügen) to make the final arrangements for the bombardment, the squadron was overtaken by a gale from the northwest, which imperilled the ponderous "Rochambeau" and did otherwise considerable harm, so that the Admiral thought it necessary to return to the Kjöge-bay.

There he was informed that Admiral Fourichon had quitted the German Ocean, and he was instructed to return to Cherbourg, but on the way thither to pass the Jade. This he did, and having refilled his bunkers he arrived off Heligoland on the 26th of September, and three days afterwards he entered Cherbourg—a little more than two months after he had left it. A French reporter represents this short stay of the Admiral at Heligoland as a challenge to our squadron of iron-clads in the Outer Jade, but this is merely another of their usual misrepresentations, for Admiral Jachmann had only been informed of the presence of the French off Heligoland



NORTH-GERMAN NAVY. SAILOR.



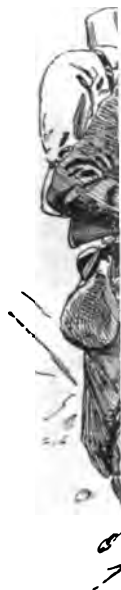
NORTH-GERMAN NAVY. MARINE.

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FRENCH

About that time there arrived at the Jade the "Falke", a light swift steamer bought abroad; she had been fitted in a German port for the use of Harvey's lately invented towing torpedoes. This vessel also was intended to be employed in offensive action, but a series of mishaps pursued this and other similar enterprises.

On the 9th of October the "Elisabeth", ordered from Kiel to the German Ocean, arrived together with the despatch-boat, the "Grille", at the Outer Jade, but to the amazement of the Admiral, without rigging and without the necessary equipment for a long cruise; moreover, on her voyage round Skagen her screw had been injured. To obviate the necessity of sending her back on the long voyage to Kiel the whole equipment was sent by rail to Glückstadt and the ship was also sent there. On starting on the 12th of October on her first trip the monitor "Arminius" collided with the "Falke", and stove a large hole into her, so that she had to be brought back to the Jade in a sinking state and beached at Wilhelmshaven. When on the 21st of November the "Elisabeth" at last was ready equipped and rigged, her screw got damaged on leaving the Elbe, and she had to be brought to the Jade in tow. This injury as well as that of the "Falke" could only be repaired in dock.

Meanwhile the dyke barring the channel in Wilhelmshaven had been removed and the work in the harbour was advanced sufficiently to make it available. At the beginning of November the "caissons", built in a port in the Baltic, had been brought from Tönning through the Eider canal, so that the dry-docks now came into use. Thus the "Elisabeth" was docked on the day after her return; she was the first ship brought into Wilhelmshaven. In the dry-dock it was seen that the repair required a large piece of new casting which had to be done abroad. When it was ready and fitted on, and the ship was once more seaworthy, news arrived that the armistice had been concluded.

Admiral Jachmann had shortly before succeeded in surmounting numerous difficulties and fitting for sea one of the two swift cruisers, which at the outbreak of the war were under repair at Danzig; it was the corvette "Augusta", built in 1864 in Bordeaux for the Confederates as a substitute for the "Alabama" and afterwards purchased by Prussia. For want of officers and men, the crew of the "Nympe" was transferred to this ship, which thus came under the command of Commander Johannes Weikhmann. It was already midwinter ere he was able to start on his voyage. He sailed round the north of Scotland, refilled his bunkers at about Christmas time on the west coast of Ireland, and cruised up to the 2nd of January, 1871, outside the Channel and off Brest in very thick and boisterous weather, without, however, falling in with any vessel carrying contraband of war. He now steered south to the Gironde, where a postal packet steamer was expected to arrive. He missed her, but on 4th January picked up two sailing vessels and a government steamer used as a troop-ship. All three vessels were loaded with ammunition and stores for the army. The two sailing vessels he sent home as prizes, but the steamer, which he could not man, had to be sunk.

Weikhmann's coals running low, he steamed with the "Augusta" into the Spanish port of Vigo, but was detained first by bad weather and afterwards by three French iron-clads and a despatch-boat, who held him closely blockaded till the conclusion of the armistice. The audacious cruiser was on no account to be allowed to escape; her appearance in the Gironde, before Bordeaux, where the National Assembly was

just holding its sittings, had called forth deep indignation, and a whole squadron was assembled in pursuit of her.

The two prizes encountered much stormy winter weather, in the bay of Biscay, in the German Ocean etc. and lost nearly all their sails. One was wrecked on the coast of Norway, off the very harbour in which the other had taken refuge; the crew was saved, all but one man. The second was afterwards fetched away and brought to Kiel by the "Augusta", which had left Vigo on the 7th of February.

The rigour of the winter of 1870/71 had meanwhile made itself felt at home; navigation in the Baltic closed early; the water-ways in the German Ocean were beset with thick ice about Christmas time, and ships were compelled to leave the dangerous positions in the Outer Jade and in the Elbe, and seek shelter in the harbour. This opportunity was utilized to dock the ironclads and smaller vessels in Wilhelmshaven. The "Friedrich Karl" was supplied with the two missing screw-blades, which had been newly cast, and the bottoms of all the ships were cleaned of the thick accumulations of long standing. With the exception of the defective engines of the "König Wilhelm", all the ships were in February restored to full efficiency.

Soon after the arrival of the "Augusta" in Vigo the corvette "Arcona" arrived in Lisbon. She had been informed at Horta of the outbreak of the war on the 23rd July, 1870, and had remained there and in the Azores making preparations for combat, till on the 17th of August the French armoured corvette "Montcalm" arrived from the Mediterranean and detained her for more than two months. Even after the Frenchman's departure the "Arcona" still remained in that archipelago, and declined the challenge of the French unarmoured frigate "Bellone", that stopped there from the 13th to the 16th of November. In December the "Arcona" cruised for a fortnight north of the Azores, but without falling in with an enemy's ship, but she suffered some damage to her rigging in consequence of the rough winter weather. At about Christmas time she returned to Horta, whence she departed on the 31st December, 1870, and arrived after a fortnight's voyage at Lisbon, where she set about making repairs, and remained in that port till the conclusion of the armistice, as she was closely watched by several French ships.

Twenty-five years ago communication with Eastern Asia was much slower than at the present day. At the beginning of the month of August 1870 the outbreak of the war was still unknown in those regions. Just then the small corvette "Medusa" was in Yokohama repairing her boilers; the spar-decked corvette "Hertha" lay on the Tshifu roads cheek by jowl with a French squadron of three ships: the frigate "Venus" with 22 guns, the corvette "Dupleix" with 12, and the despatch-boat "Linois" with 6 guns, all under command of Admiral Dupré. There were in addition some French gun-boats off Tientsin, which shortly before had been the scene of troublous events, leading to the murder of the French Consul and to the expectation of immediate warlike action by France against China. The armoured corvette "Alma" was on the way to Eastern Asia, and there was also a number of men-of-war in French Cochin China.

Not till the 8th of August did reports arrive in Tshifu of war having broken out between France and Germany. It was therefore dangerous for the "Hertha" to remain any longer in those waters; she therefore left the roads at midnight of the 9th of August, and went to Japan, but not to Yokohama where the "Medusa" lay, and where the embassy would be sure to receive early news, but to Nagasaki, which

was close by. After 36 hours the "Dupleix" also arrived at the same place. She had been sent by Admiral Dupré, and her commander made to the "Hertha" the astounding proposal to declare by treaty that during the duration of the war, of which the German had as yet received no official information—the Chinese and Japanese waters should be regarded as neutral seas. The Commandant of the "Hertha" accepted, but remained still in Nagasaki after the "Dupleix" had departed for Yokohama on the 17th of August to transact business with the ambassador there. On the 2nd of September, that is to say 16 days afterwards, the "Hertha" thought it advisable to follow the "Dupleix" to the same place.

On the 7th of September the "Hertha" arrived at Yokohama, and on the following day the "Medusa" had all repairs finished and was ready to go to sea; now both vessels lay at anchor in the bay for weeks together, with the "Dupleix" awaiting confirmation



CAPTAIN-LIEUTENANT KNORR.

of their treaty of neutrality from home. On the 27th Admiral Dupré arrived with the "Venus" and the "Linois" and declared that the whole arrangement was invalid. The whole transaction may possibly have been a ruse to neutralize the German ships in case the expected war with China should come off, but nothing is known for certain; at any rate the French government had postponed for a time the settlement of their dispute with China. The "Hertha" and "Medusa" remained in Yokohama till news arrived of the conclusion of the armistice, at first watched by the three French ships named above; subsequently, from the middle of December by the iron-clads "Alma" and "Dupleix", and blockaded from the 11th of February, 1871.

Captain-Lieutenant Knorr, in command of the "Meteor" in the West-Indies, had conceived a different idea

of his duty. His vessel was originally built to be employed only in the home waters near the coast; she was of 347 tons displacement and of 320 horse-power; her armament consisted of three rifled guns (one of 15¹ and two of 12² cm. calibre), and her complement amounted to 62 men. At the end of July she lay in La Guayara roads (Venezuela) together with the "Talisman," a third-class French cruiser of four times her size. Against such odds a contest would have been hopeless. The first rumours of war arrived on the 30th of July, and when the "Talisman" went to Martinique to make enquiries, Knorr, to avoid capture after the Frenchman's return.

¹ 15 cm. = 6 inches very nearly. } [Trs.]
² 12 cm. = 4.8 " " }

left the roads, and first ran to Jamaica, where he was informed of the outbreak of the war; he then proceeded to Key West, a coral isle with a small naval port belonging to the United States, situated at the southern extremity of Florida. He intended to obtain a larger and swifter ship to which he would have transferred his crew and armament, but failed in this endeavour. For this reason and because strict neutrality had been proclaimed by the Washington government he sailed to Havana, where he arrived on the 7th of November at 9 o'clock in the morning. Soon afterwards, to the great delight of his men, a French despatch-boat that had not been observed at sea, arrived in harbour and attached herself to a buoy near the "Meteor." It was the "Bouvet" of 700 tons displacement and 610 horse-power, being thus double in size and of double engine-power, she was therefore the swifter boat, of 11 knots speed. Her armament, consisting of one 16 cm. ^{*} and two 12 cm. guns, was very similar to that of the "Meteor," except that the principal gun of the Frenchman was more powerful than that of the German; in addition the former carried four swivel-guns in the fighting-top. Her complement is variously given, but probably amounted to 85 men.

Captain-Lieutenant Knorr only paid a visit to the Spanish Governor-General, and at one o'clock at once went to sea, and waited outside the harbour so that he could not fail to be seen by the "Bouvet". Being ignorant of the Spanish neutrality regulations, according to which the Frenchman was not allowed to leave port till 24 hours after his enemy's departure, Knorr in the evening returned to his anchorage. There he was informed that the "Bouvet" was to go to sea at noon of the following day and lie in wait for him. This was done, and on the 9th of November at one o'clock in the afternoon, exactly after the expiration of the prescribed 24 hours the "Meteor" followed. Soon after her, two Spanish men-of-war, with the Governor-General, the Port-Admiral and a number of officers etc. on board, sailed out to witness the battle from the zone of neutrality. All Havana, garrison and inhabitants, hurried out and assembled on the walls, the fortifications and the high beach, intent on watching the event.

The weather was good, but the sky was overclouded and the air close; there was a north-east breeze felt lightly under the lee of the land, but more strongly on the open sea, so that the flat-bottomed, small gun-boat laboured heavily.

After half an hour the "Bouvet" hove in sight in the north: she steered towards the south-east, so that her guns should be brought to bear upon the "Meteor", who steered north-east against wind and sea at the rate of about 6 knots. The boats rapidly approached each other. At a distance of about 2000 yards the Frenchman opened fire; his shells did not hit the boat, but struck so near it that the water spurted on deck. After he had fired eight shots and the boats were only 1000 yards apart, Knorr opened fire from his 12 cm. guns on the bow and held off somewhat to the east to bring his heavy 15 cm. midship-gun to bear upon the enemy, thereby exposing his broadside. The French Commander Franquet resolved to take advantage of that. In artillery he was but slightly superior to his enemy, but in weight and speed he had double the force; accordingly he determined to run him down, and ran at him full-speed from a distance of about 800 yards with the intent of ramming him.

Had he succeeded in striking the boat midship he would inevitably have sunk

^{*} 16 cm. = 6.3 in. [*Trs.*]

her, but Knorr at once understood the manœuvre, and in the short time allowed him, only $1\frac{1}{2}$ minutes, he frustrated the attempt by a counter-manœuvre. He altered the course so that the collision took place at the very acute angle of about 5° , and the two boats merely scraped and passed each other at full speed within a few seconds. But whilst the "Bouvet" got off apparently unscathed, the little, low-lying gun-boat was badly damaged.

A volley delivered by the Frenchman, shortly before the collision, from both his 12 cm. guns, which had been moved forward, and from a number of rifles at a distance of only 30 yards had produced no effect to speak of; but the bow of the despatch-boat had shivered the port-side boats and the bridge of the "Meteor"; it struck the chase of the midship gun that was run out and also of the stern guns, slewing them round so that they could not be fired, and the stern guns became useless; the "Bouvet's" powerful fore-yard smashed the fore-yard and the mizen-mast of the gun-boat, and snapped off the main mast, and her iron bowsprit razed the port bulwark. From the fighting-tops high above, the French delivered a rapid fire from small arms, killing the helmsman near the Captain, and another sailor, and severely wounding a third man.

Hull and engines of the "Meteor" had escaped unhurt, but nevertheless for a short while she lay helpless on the water, rolling heavily, encumbered by the debris of the rigging which had to be cleared away. Knorr manœuvred skilfully so that the mainmast, still swaying, and the mizen mast fell to starboard and the guns on the portside were set free. Now laying to heavily, and working the engines at full force, he succeeded, in spite of the rigging he towed after him and which could not be cut away as the ropes were of wire, in bringing his vessel round so far that the guns still serviceable could be brought to bear on the enemy.

Strangely enough the Frenchman had not utilized this interval, for after he had run past the gun-boat for about 300 yards, his engines stopped and he lay without firing, offering his broadside to the enemy. It is probable that his engines and his heavy gun amidship had suffered damage by the collision and were not fit for immediate use; he may also have thought that he could take his time with his crippled antagonist, who had evidently been severely punished.

The "Meteor" now fired her first shot from the 15 cm. gun; it hit, as was intended, midship, just above the waterline, and immediately the Frenchman was enveloped in a volume of steam. This blow was felt to be decisive, and a thundering hurrah from the men of the gun-boat that had apparently suffered so badly, proclaimed the victory. For such it was. The topsides of the "Bouvet" lying above the waterline had been struck in spite of the anchor-chains, coal- and sand-bags stowed round them for protection, and so the engines were rendered useless.

Commander Franquet promptly set sail, and flying before the wind made for Havana, thus seeking neutral waters and leaving to the "Meteor" the battle-field and the victory. Captain Knorr tried to pursue and worked the engines at utmost pressure, when suddenly the tiller, which was under hard strain, snapped, and immediately after, at 3.45 p.m., the screw fouled with the tackle that was towing astern. The engines had to be stopped, relieving tackle fitted and the screw cleared.

Though the men worked with a hearty will and strained every nerve, yet half an hour was gone ere the engines could be set to work again and the pursuit be resumed.

The "Meteor" opened fire, but the delay and the favourable breeze had given the "Bouvet" a good start and carried her out of the range; however, the German vessel going under steam was fast gaining upon the Frenchman and would soon have had her under fire again, but after the fourth shot the Frenchman reached neutral waters. It was at 4.40 p.m. and the fact was indicated by a shot fired from the Spanish corvette "Hernan Cortez". This terminated the battle and the pursuit.

Had the contest been continued, the "Bouvet" now inferior to the "Meteor" in speed and manœuvring capacity, would inevitably have been compelled to strike her flag. After the collision the Frenchman had not fired a shot; the rush of steam had scalded three of his men and the Commandant himself was slightly wounded.

The "Bouvet" entered the harbour of Havana to repair her engines; she required three weeks to effect partial repairs, sufficient to enable her to proceed to Martinique. The "Meteor" also entered the harbour to land her wounded sailor; she was greeted with loud, never-ending "vivas" from the throats of tens of thousands that had collected on the fortifications, the shore and the house-tops. After 36 hours she was again in good fighting trim, and escorted a German steam-packet for some distance out to sea. Afterwards she was detained in port till the conclusion of the armistice by the labour of replacing the rigging and the boats, which the Royal Spanish dockyard readily engaged to do, but carried out very tardily. At the same time French men-of-war were incessantly cruising outside the port.

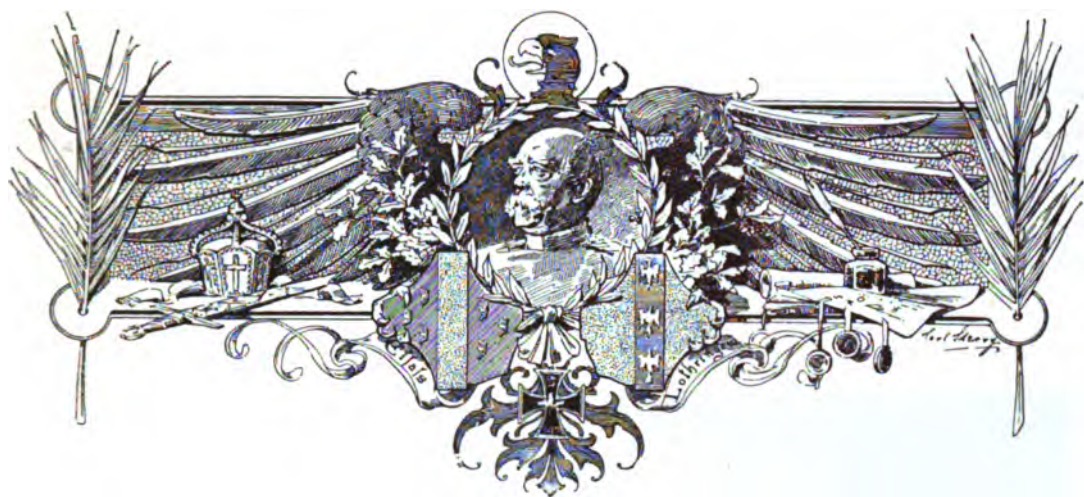
A detachment of our naval forces was sent out to France. It was despatched to Orleans in 1871 to man four river gun-boats which the French had brought by train, and which were captured by Prince Frederick Charles when he took the city. Owing to the shallowness of the River Loire, both below and above Orleans, these vessels had no chance of joining in any engagement.

Our fleet, which was then in its initiatory stage, had no opportunity to share in the heroic deeds of our army; with the exception of a few ships stationed abroad, its duties were restricted to protecting our coasts, all the while expecting from day to day to be attacked by the overwhelming forces of a superior enemy. The corvette "Augusta" alone issued into the Atlantic, all other offensive operations having been frustrated by misadventures. That one duty, however, the navy discharged faithfully, and our coast was saved from all harm and insult. In comparison with the unparalleled career of our soldiers, our sailors had to exhibit the virtues of patient endurance. How painfully this was felt, God alone knows. That our navy was not deficient in pluck was proved by Captain-Lieutenant Knorr's action with the "Meteor" at Havana and by Commander Johannes Weickhmann with the "Augusta" off the Gironde, and indeed also by the intention, albeit frustrated, of Admiral Jachmann to attack the threefold superior force of the enemy's ironclads off Heligoland.

The remissness of the French in not attacking our coast has spread the opinion in Germany, that their mighty fleet was entirely useless to them in the war, but this is a great mistake. In the Baltic and in the German Ocean the conduct of the French was certainly as feeble as possible, principally on account of the incapacity of their superior officers, and partly also in consequence of the erroneous views on naval warfare then entertained by the rulers of France; nevertheless their squadrons of ironclads ruled the waters along our coast, interrupted our trade and held engaged a considerable number of our land forces. Moreover, the French navy paralyzed, or

at least disturbed, our extensive commerce in all seas, and at the same time kept them open for their own mercantile navy. And but for the gigantic importations by sea of ammunitions of war of every kind the French government could not possibly have organized the popular risings, and protracted the war into the following year.

Finally, the navy sent to the French army and garrisons 57,000 excellent combatants, supplied it with enormous quantities of arms and stores, comprising upwards of 1000 heavy guns and 176 field batteries; 15,000 men, and 170 heavy guns were despatched to Paris alone. And everywhere these troops fought well, as in the defence of Bazeille in the battle of Sedan, probably the most obstinate struggle in the whole war. Many naval officers distinguished themselves as leaders in the war on land, as for example Admiral Jauréguiberry, who commanded with distinction a corps of the army of the Loire. And it must be acknowledged that the French naval officers proved themselves brave and chivalrous enemies, both on land and at sea.



PART III

CHAPTER I

THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE WAR

By Dr. THEODOR FLATHE

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IMMEDIATELY after King William's return from Ems, i.e. during the night between the 15th and 16th of July, 1870, a Council of War was held at the Royal Palace of Berlin. Two important resolutions were arrived at, viz., the mobilization of the whole army and the summoning of the North German Parliament (Reichstag) for the 19th of July. Two days before this parliament met Bismarck had found it necessary to send a circular to all the representatives of the North German Confederation at foreign courts to refute the French lies about the causes of this war. "If accordingly," he continued, "all the reasons adduced by the French government are seen to be valueless and baseless, we are unfortunately driven to seek the true motives of this aggression in the worst traditions of Louis XIV and the First Empire, which, though they have for half a century been stigmatised by the civilized world, a certain party in France still inscribes on its standards. We can, alas, recognise as the efficient causes of this regrettable phenomenon only the worst instincts of hatred and jealousy of the independence and prosperity of Germany, and the desire to repress liberty in France by entangling her in foreign wars. . . . Before God and men we must hold those men answerable, who compel us by their criminal action to enter on this war for the defence of the national honour and freedom of the German nation."

With this letter Bismarck opened a diplomatic campaign, which he conducted with a masterly skill and force equal to that displayed by Moltke in the military campaign.

The speech of the venerable monarch at the opening of parliament breathed a like spirit of firm resolve and of trust in God. "If," said he, "Germany has in former centuries borne in silence such violence done to her rights, it was due to her state of dismemberment, which hid from her the secret of her own strength; at the present time, however, when the bond of both legal and heartfelt union, which the "Wars of Liberation" ¹ began to weave, knits the German tribes together more and more closely as time goes on, when the German armour no longer exposes any joint to the foe, our country is able and resolved to repel this renewed French aggression.

The German parliament expressed its perfect agreement with government, and



Legat.-Rat Abeken.

Legat.-Rat v. Keudell.

Prince Bismarck.

v. Delbrück.

Graf v. Bismarck-Bohlen.

Legat.-Rat Graf v. Hatzfeld.

reflected in a heart-stirring manner the unanimous disposition of the German people, one which had had no parallel in the whole of German history. The South remained not a whit behind the North. The patriotism of the Grand Duke and the people of Baden placed its accession beyond all doubt, and the young King Louis II of Bavaria announced in Berlin as early as the 19th, that he had ordered the mobilization of his army, in order to place it under the command of King William in conformity with the treaty of 1866, and to the Prussian thanks sent to him by telegraph he replied: "My troops will fight with enthusiasm at the side of their glorious comrades in arms

¹ These are the wars in 1813/15 to shake off the yoke of Napoleon I. [Trs.]

for German right and German honour". These were the same troops who had only four years previously measured strength with these same Prussians as their foes. Nevertheless the ultramontane majority of the Chamber of Catholic Bavaria voted the demand of 18 millions only after a hot debate, with 101 votes against 47 votes, the War Minister von Prankh, an unwavering particularist, having reminded the House that Bavaria, albeit an independent state, must not omit to prove that she was also a German state. Now the Württemberg Chamber which was democratically minded and enthusiastic for Greater Germany,¹ did not venture to offer any opposition, only the Württemberg Minister von Varnbühler kept, with Bismarck's knowledge, the French ambassador for some days in suspense, in order to deprive the enemy as long as possible of a secure basis for his military plans.

The German people entered upon this war with solemn self-restraint, with full consciousness of the impending dangers and sacrifices, but also in absolute faith and trust in the Divine assistance in their righteous cause. On the 31st of July, shortly before King William set out for the scene of war, he once more met his Cabinet to give expression to his joy and to his gratification at the glorious spirit of unanimity which during the weeks just past had manifested itself through the length and breadth of the German fatherland. It was different in France. When in the great opera-house of Paris the public demanded after the singing of the Marseillaise Musset's "German Rhine",² and the singers hesitated, Girardin cried out to them from his box: "Why, you require more time to sing the Rhine, than our warriors require to take it!"

Bismarck being Chief of the Foreign Office with the Army in the field, now entered upon a period of restless activity. He was accompanied on the campaign by the Privy-Councillors Abeken (afterwards replaced by L. Bucher) and von Keudell; also by Counts Hatzfeld and Bismarck-Bohlen. He was generally at work all through the night and only retired to rest at break of day. For German diplomacy, although compelled in French affairs to give precedence to the sword, was taxed all the heavier in other directions. An, at times, arduous struggle was carried on against the ill will or at any rate importunity of foreign Powers, who under the pretext of neutrality or mediation created difficulties for the German government and thus supported the resistance of France. But on one point Bismarck was fully resolved, viz., that the sad experience of 1815 was not to be repeated, that the envy of the foreigner was not again to deprive the German nation of the fruits of the struggles in which it had expended so much precious blood. The Pope's offer of mediation King William easily set aside by declaring that if His Holiness could give security on the part of him who had so wantonly declared war, that similar aggression upon the peace and repose of Europe would not be repeated in future, he (King William) would certainly not

¹ *I. e.*, it included Austria. [*Trs.*]

² When in 1840 France under Louis Philippe threatened Germany with war the German poet Niklas Becker wrote the song:

"Sie sollen ihn nicht haben den freien, deutschen Rhein"

"They shall not have it, the free, the German Rhine".

Thereupon Musset published his jeering reply:

"Nous l'avons eu votre Rhin Allemand"

"We have had it that German Rhine of yours". [*Trs.*]

refuse to receive this assurance from such venerable hands. But the dealings with the other Great Powers were not quite so simple.

A decisive word spoken by England at the right time would no doubt have considerably damped French love of aggression, but the feeble foreign policy of the Gladstone-Granville Cabinet was unable to rise to such a height, however much they may have disapproved the conduct of France. A Royal proclamation of the 19th of July announced the neutrality of England, but unfortunately this neutrality gave evidence during the whole course of the war of a decided benevolence for France, and by incessant interference was troublesome to the German government, of course, however, not to so great an extent as not to leave England clear of entanglements with continental affairs. When Earl Granville too late made mention of the clause of the Treaty of Paris of 1856, according to which Powers engaged in a dispute should invoke the good services of friendly Powers, Bismarck replied that France had assumed the initiative of the war and adhered to it, even after the initial cause had, as England herself had admitted, been removed. Were the German government now to take the first steps for renewed negotiations there would be danger that the German people, deeply hurt and outraged in its national sentiment by the French threats, would resent and misunderstand such a step. Our strength lay in the nation's consciousness of right and in its sense of honour, whilst the French government had shewn itself independent of this kind of support at home.

England being so little reliable, the Chancellor had secured a more trustworthy ally in the friendship of Russia. Alexander II was induced to side with Prussia not only by his deep personal respect for his Royal uncle, but also by political considerations of supreme importance. Napoleon's behaviour during the Polish insurrection of 1863 had not been forgotten in St. Petersburg; a victorious advance of the French in Germany, which everybody at first thought probable, would inevitably have provoked a new rising in Russia's Polish provinces, which had been subdued with so much difficulty; and in addition Russia had been promised in 1866 by Prussia, that she would at a favourable opportunity coöperate in obtaining the rescinding of the clause in the Treaty of Paris of 1856, which was forced upon Russia by England and France, and which she felt so bitterly as detrimental to her power in the Black Sea. Russia accordingly proclaimed her neutrality, to which she would firmly adhere so long as her interests were at all compatible with it; in plain words: so long as no Polish insurrection took place and Austria did not intervene in favour of France. This attitude of Russia immediately kept Denmark in check, that Denmark upon whose coöperation France had calculated with certainty in the event of a French landing on the German coast; the invitation to an alliance which the Duke of Cadore, Napoleon's ambassador, brought to Copenhagen arrived too late. A still greater effect Russia's declaration had upon Austria-Hungary.

How little the German government trusted the friendly feeling of this Power is evinced by the fact that at the outbreak of the war two German army-corps were left behind in the east to watch the Austrian frontiers. Count Beust, who had been made impossible in Saxony by the war of 1866, and had become Imperial Prime Minister of Austria-Hungary, justified this distrust by his whole conduct. A part of the Austrian army ardently desired to fall upon the rear of the Germans in the field. Although the Salzburg meeting of 1867 between the Emperors of France and of

Austria and their respective ministers, as well as the negotiations with King Victor Emanuel of Italy flowing therefrom, had led to no formal alliance, nevertheless this meeting, together with the impressions gained in Vienna by the Duke of Gramont, the French ambassador at the Austrian court, had created in Paris the conviction that France could, in case of war, rely upon the coöperation of Austria. Gladstone also declared: "We had no doubt about the Austrian inclinations, which tended certainly not to act independently, but to lean upon France, if events should turn out favourably". But, in addition to the certainty that at the first indication of Austrian action in that direction Russia would join the contest and side with Germany, further



EMPEROR ALEXANDER II OF RUSSIA.

obstacles presented themselves, viz., that the country was greatly in need of peace, and that the Germans of Austria and the Magyars were reluctant to side with France. Consequently Beust was in great perplexity when Count Vimercati, the Italian military attaché in Paris, instructed by Gramont, brought a proposal for an offensive and defensive alliance between Austria, Italy and France, according to which the first two Powers should, to begin with, remain neutral, but arm meanwhile, and, when fully prepared for war, offer to Prussia their mediation upon unacceptable terms, and then declare war when the anticipated refusal was delivered. Beust, dreading lest he should expose Austria to great dangers, whatever the issue of the war might be, was anxious to remain on good terms with both parties. He therefore tried an

evasion to gain time and keep his hands free; for he did not so much disapprove of the war as of the unskilful selection of the pretext and the time. On the 18th of July, then, he made the proposal at the Astrian cabinet-council, for the present to maintain a waiting attitude, but for their own security, silently to place the army on half the war footing. Count Andrassy, however, the President of the Hungarian Ministry, uncompromisingly opposed this view. He too considered it necessary to arm, and asked for a sum of 20 million florins (= £ 2,000,000), but solely and exclusively to protect Austria's neutrality, and he carried his proposal. Beust had to submit, but did not abandon his plan for all that. On the contrary, he caused his confidant, Count Vitzthum, to write a private letter, dated July 20, to Prince Metternich, the Austrian ambassador at Paris, ostensibly to announce Austria's neutrality, but in



GRAF BEUST.

reality to explain its true meaning to his friend on the banks of the Seine. "Be so good," he says, "to repeat to His Majesty the Emperor and his ministers, that in accordance with the obligation assumed by us in the letters exchanged between the two Sovereigns towards the end of last year, we shall faithfully regard the cause of France as our own, and coöperate for the success of her arms as far as lies for us within the limits of possibility. These limits are defined for us partly by our circumstances at home and partly by political considerations of supreme importance. We have reason to believe that our intervention would immediately be followed by that of Russia. To keep the latter Power neutral till the moment when the season will no longer allow her to concentrate her forces, and to avoid

everything that might furnish her with a pretext for intervention must be our policy for the present. It must be clearly understood in Paris, that Russia's neutrality depends on that of Austria. Neither must we forget that our ten million Germans regard this war, not as a duel between France and Prussia, but as the commencement of a national struggle. And again we must not blind ourselves to the fact that the Hungarians will hold back when they are called upon to sacrifice blood and treasure for the recovery of our position in Germany. Under these circumstances, the word neutrality, which we utter with much regret, has become to us an imperative necessity. But this neutrality is only a means to approach the true aim of our policy, the completion of our armament, without exposing ourselves to a premature attack of either Prussia or Russia. But whilst we announce our neutrality, we have not lost a moment in communicating with Italy with regard to the mediation entrusted to us by the

Emperor Napoleon..... On the same day when the French evacuate Rome, the Italians must march in with the consent of France and Austria. We shall never have the Italians on our side unless we remove that sting of Rome. With such an act of undoubted liberal policy, France would deprive her enemy of one of his weapons, and at the same time erect a barrier against the flood of Teutonism, the spirit of which Prussia, an eminently Protestant Power, has known how to rouse in Germany, and which we have reason doubly to fear on account of its infectiousness."

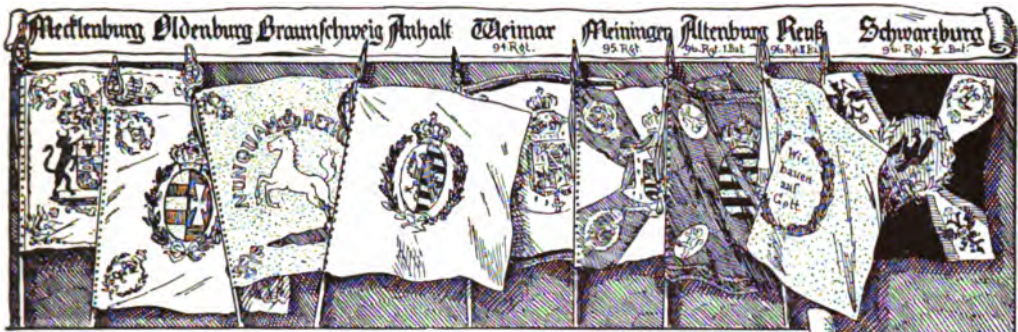
In this exposition it was clearly laid down that the giving up of Rome to Italy was an indispensable preliminary to the formation of a triple alliance between France, Austria, and Italy. In September 1869 the formation of the alliance fell through because Napoleon, dreading the opposition of the clericals in France, refused to withdraw the French garrison from the Papal States. Now at the outbreak of the war he declared himself ready to recall his troops and to adhere to the terms of the treaty of the 15th of September, 1864, by which he, on the one hand, was bound to evacuate Rome within two years, and, on the other hand, Italy undertook not to enter the Papal territories, and to protect them against foreign aggression. But under the altered circumstances this no longer sufficed. Up to then King Victor Emanuel had, contrary to the views prevailing in his cabinet, been ardent to join the war side by side with France; of course on the understanding that it should secure for him Rome as the capital of Italy, in conformity with Beust's explanations. But this heretical proposal caused great indignation at the Tuileries. "Rather have the Prussians in Paris than the Italians in Rome" was the watchword resounding in the antechambers of the Imperial palace. Gramont simply insisted on the renewal by Italy of the September treaty as the condition of the departure of the French from Rome. To secure this latter point the cabinet of Florence complied, but at the same time announced by Royal proclamation the neutrality of Italy in the impending war: this was in fact dictated by the unprepared state of the country. Gramont, frivolous as he was, expressed himself highly gratified with this turn of affairs; was not neutrality understood to be the first step toward comradeship in war? And yet in reality this was the *coup-de-grace* to the triple alliance; nevertheless Beust, the busybody, would not rest, but proposed an offensive and defensive alliance between Austria and Italy, who were to declare a neutrality benevolent to France. Both Powers were to bind themselves to place their armies on a war footing and to act in agreement both in military and in diplomatic affairs, and Austria promised in addition to use her influence in Paris so as to secure the evacuation of the Papal States on terms advantageous to Italy. On the 1st of August this scheme was submitted to the government in Florence, and on the 2nd of August to Napoleon in Metz, but with small success. Napoleon simply insisted on adherence to the September treaty, and this obstinacy, together with the delay in the anticipated arrival of French victories, cooled Victor Emanuel's warlike ardour.

Instead of reports of victories there came one after another the news of the defeats at Weissenburg, Wörth, and Spicheren. In his alarm Gramont could think of no better plan than to ask of the Italian government, whether they would not, even without Austria, support France with an army of 60,000 men. But how could Italy, after the turn affairs had taken, commit such a suicidal act, which would not even be useful to France. The French military authorities had calculated upon alliances, that would bind victory to their standards; and French statesmen had calculated upon

the victory of their arms, which would bring them allies, and this mutual delusion accelerated the disaster which overwhelmed their country.

Whilst these diplomatic transactions of the cabinets were in progress, the English paper, the "Times," startled the world on the 25th of July with the publication of a treaty-scheme submitted to Count Bismarck in August 1866 by Benedetti, the French ambassador, according to which Prussia was to support France in the acquisition of Belgium, and in return compensate herself by proportionate annexations in North Germany. Benedetti had, moreover, committed the indiscretion of leaving the document, in his own handwriting, in Bismarck's possession. Photographic copies of this document, circulated amongst the whole corps of diplomatists, proved it genuine beyond all doubt. This first revelation was speedily followed by that of a second plot proposed by Benedetti on the 5th of August, 1866, according to which Prussia was to bind herself to obtain from the King of Bavaria and the Grand Duke of Hesse the cession to France of their territories on the left bank of the Rhine; and finally on the 29th of July a circular of the Chancellor lifted the veil from other secret offers of France, which harked back to times even anterior to the war of 1866 and had from time to time been repeated ever since, and which all aimed at tempting Prussia to seek aggrandisement on varying scales to the mutual profit of both governments. At one time Luxemburg was in question, at another time the frontier of 1814, of Landau-Saarlouis, at others again bolder alterations were brought on the tapis, inclusive of the question of French Switzerland, and of the language boundary in Piedmont. These revelations exploded like a bomb in all Europe. The pitiable excuses of Benedetti, that he had written that document more or less under Bismarck's dictation, who had himself proposed the aggrandisement of France, which, however, had been declined by her, only proved before all the world both the brutal covetousness, to the disregard of all notions of law and right, and the mendacity of Napoleonic policy. Concurrently every German was amused and gratified at Bismarck's demonstrated superiority over the French diplomatist.

It was not without good reason that the Chancellor selected an English paper for this crushing revelation. The inviolability of Belgium has been from of old a fundamental principle of British policy; nowhere was the impression produced as intense as in England, and public opinion at once took side against the insatiable disturber of the peace of Europe. Even Earl Granville roused himself to propose a treaty to both the belligerent Powers, binding each of them to oppose, jointly with England, every invasion of Belgian territory by the other. But by the time that was signed (on the 9th and 11th August) it had already been rendered practically valueless by the march of events, and "healthful English egoism" speedily forgot its grudge against the originator of the war and was only anxious to safeguard the country's commercial interests. Regardless of the neutrality that had been proclaimed, English commercial firms supplied the French, on a large scale, with coals, ammunition, and other war matériel, and when Bismarck called upon the English government to prevent such violation of international law, Earl Granville answered that coals and ammunition were such important articles of the English export-trade, that it was impossible to issue a general prohibition of their exportation; nor were these articles necessarily contraband of war, except when addressed to a belligerent Power. This led to some, at times somewhat heated, discussions. As late as the month of January



the Chancellor lodged complaints in London through Count Bernstorff, the German ambassador, that the open toleration of the export of arms was furnishing the enemy with the means of protracting the contest. He pointed out that the enemy had been conquered at an enormous sacrifice, and that though the final issue of the war would not be essentially altered, yet the protracted struggle was inflicting heavier sacrifices and greater loss of blood on both sides. The most eloquent defender of this kind of neutrality would not find it easy to reconcile it before a German audience with the much vaunted love of peace and humanity so generally professed by England. However unanswerable this argument may have been, it proved entirely unavailing; England and North America were to the end of the chapter the great arsenals by means of which France replenished her armaments.

Tiny Luxemburg, from hatred of the Germans, ventured on still more audacious violations of right. Whilst Germany guarded the neutrality of the Grand-Duchy so scrupulously that, upon the protest of France, she even forbore conveying her wounded across Luxemburg territory, night trains from there brought supplies to the besieged fortress of Thionville, and the French consul opened an office at the Luxemburg railway terminus to receive fugitives from the Capitulation of Metz and forward them to the Northern Army of France. At last Bismarck put a stop to it by threatening that he would no longer recognize the neutrality of the Duchy.

When on the 4th and 6th of August the King's telegrams arrived ordering the guns to be fired in celebration of victory, the German nation burst out in shouts of exultation beyond all precedent. All the more cruel was the awakening of the French, especially of the Parisians, from the crazy delusions engendered by the boastings and agitation of their papers. With the arrival of the first Job's messenger, whom they could hardly believe, Napoleon's throne at once began to totter. Parliament was summoned in all haste and a vote of want of confidence speedily ousted the cabinet Ollivier-Gramont; when Jules Favre carried his motion for the reëstablishment of the National Guard he furnished the Revolution with a standing army. After the terrible defeats outside Metz the people were seized by a frenzy of revolutionary ardour and patriotic fury. Terrified by the mysterious intimacy of the Germans with their local topography, they scented treason and spies in every corner, and the impotent government of Count Palikao yielded to popular clamour and passed a measure which is without parallel among the civilized nations of modern days, viz., the expulsion of all Germans settled in France. The French Empire lately so proud humbled itself in its distress

so deeply that it went begging for help to Italy, its late *protégé*. On the 19th of August the Emperor sent his cousin, Prince Napoleon, hurriedly to Florence to see what success he might have with his father-in-law. But the Prince preached to deaf ears; there were counter-currents which frustrated all his efforts. Garibaldi and his party raised loud protest against every intervention in favour of the man of the 2nd of December,¹ and the Prince's offer to leave to Italy a free hand with respect to Rome in return for her armed assistance against Germany, had ceased to have any value in the eyes of the King's ministers. They evaded the demand by asserting the necessity of their coming to an understanding with Austria, and finally to escape all further importunity they appealed to London, where they found a ready hearing. Since every war was detrimental to trade, the British cabinet thought it its duty to "localize" the war, the outbreak of which they had been unable to prevent; in other words England thwarted the formation of alliances. Russia readily consented to the

formation of a league of neutrals, so as to secure concerted action, and Beust pursued this aim with much ardour. From the outstart he had considered "the inaction of Europe in presence of this war" to be a mistake; he opined "that the united forces of the Powers should aim not only at moderating the demands of the victor, but also at assuaging the bitterness of the emotions, which could not but crush the defeated"; in other words, the league of the neutrals should be instrumental in arresting and fettering the German arm by a common intervention. But the cabinet of England held that this was going too far; it preferred individual mediation; Russia took the same view, because she needed the help of Prussia in the question of the Black Sea treaty, and the upshot of the whole negotiation was that, according to the English proposal, every neutral bound himself to give previous notice to the other neutral Powers, if



BISMARCK AT SEDAN.
(From a contemporary sketch by L. Pietsch.)

¹ The 2nd of December, 1852, is the date of Napoleon's *coup d'état* [*Trs.*]

he intended to abandon his neutrality. "Je ne vois plus d'Europe," Beust exclaimed with a sigh, but he had to submit; the end of the league was to hinder mediation instead of promoting it.

France having wantonly provoked the war went forward to meet her fate at Sedan. It took a long time, at least in Paris, ere the full gravity of the situation was recognized. When at last on September 4th the catastrophe of Sedan could no longer be concealed, everybody knew that it was the death-blow of the Empire. As usual a wild mob stormed the House and the members were dispersed amidst the shouts of: "Long live the Republic!" There was not found a single Frenchman to look after the fugitive Empress, and the representatives of Austria and Italy had to bring her to a place of safety.

A Provisional Government was established at the Hôtel de Ville, and Gambetta assumed the office of Home Secretary, or Minister of the Interior. On the 6th Jules Favre, the self-appointed Foreign Secretary, issued a pompous circular falsely stating that King William had said that he waged war with Napoleon only, and that after the fall of this latter the war had lost all justification; in reality the proclamation of the King of Prussia was to the effect that he waged war with the soldiers and not with the citizens of France. Jules Favre now made the proud statement: "France will not cede one inch of her territory, nor one stone of her fortresses". This theatrical phrase was made the watchword of the future.



JULES FAVRE.

Surely a strange demand to make of the Germans! After having made Napoleon prisoner simply to return across the Rhine without any guerdon of victory beyond being pardoned by the New Republic for the victories they had achieved. No need to state that this appeal to the Germans was simply ignored by them. At Donchery, even, the French General Wimpffen, who was a prisoner of war, tried to convince Bismarck that a lasting peace was possible only if the Germans shewed themselves generous and forbearing towards France, and thus gained the gratitude of the French people; to this Bismarck replied that the gratitude of a King might be relied upon, but not that of a people, and least of all that of the French people. France had no permanency, no settled institutions; governments and dynasties succeeded each other, none of which was bound to respect the engagements of its predecessor. The French were an envious and jealous race; they had taken offence at Königsgrätz, which did them no harm; how could any generosity shown them induce them not to bear a grudge for Sedan? Moral guarantees therefore were of no use, and material guarantees were

indispensable. The present rulers of France believed that, because they had belonged to the party that had disapproved of the war, they therefore could claim from the conqueror forbearance, and from the rest of the world assistance, and more effective assistance than had been awarded to them by Switzerland and the United States, who had received their new-born republican sister with warm but barren effusion. Being importuned by Favre, Earl Granville at last allowed himself to be persuaded to ask the Chancellor on what terms he was prepared to enter upon negotiations for an armistice, and eventually upon a congress to discuss terms of peace. Now Bismarck felt that the time had arrived when he ought to explain to the Powers in unmistakable language the standpoint of the German governments. "In view," he said in his circular of the 13th of September, "of the ease with which the peaceable disposition of the French people has changed into its opposite; of the accord with which the majority of the deputies, Senate, and Press, has acclaimed the war of conquest



MEDAL OF THE TOWN OF STRASSBURG.
(Royal Cabinet, Berlin.)

against us, we cannot look for guarantees in the temper and disposition of the French people. It is no use to hide from ourselves, that in consequence of this war we must be prepared for a speedily renewed aggression on the part of France and not for a lasting peace, and this quite independently of the terms now arrived at. It is the defeat, our victorious repulse of their criminal attack, which the French will never forgive us. If now we were to return home without any cession of territory, or any other advantage except the glory we have gained, there would yet remain the same implacable hatred, the same thirst for revenge on account of their wounded vanity and love of supremacy, and they would only bide their time, till they saw a chance of giving practical effect to their ruling passions. The German nation ought not to be called upon to repeat a gigantic effort such as it has made on the present occasion, and we are therefore compelled to look for material guarantees for Germany's safety against future attacks of France, guarantees which would at the same time insure the peace of Europe, for that has nothing to fear from Germany. We must claim

this security, not from an ephemeral French government, but from the French nation, which stands convicted of the readiness to follow any government in an aggressive war upon us. Our terms of peace must have for their aim solely to increase the difficulties for France to surmount in a renewed aggression upon the German frontiers, especially upon those of Southern Germany which have too long been dangerously exposed. This must be done by pushing the frontiers, the starting-point of the French attacks, further back to the west, and causing those fortresses which have hitherto threatened us, to be placed as defensive bulwarks in the hands of Germany."

With the 4th of September the last faint prospect of foreign armed intervention in favour of France had vanished, nevertheless even the new rulers at Paris clung desperately to that hope. Still possessed by the delusion that it was France's mission to dominate Europe, they passed round the watchword: "*L'Europe ne veut pas changer de maître.*"¹ Thiers had most loudly opposed Gramont's warlike ardour, but he would no doubt have approved of it if the war had been entered upon at the right time, with superior forces, and with allies. He now, in spite of his advanced age of 73, engaged on the fatiguing journeys to the courts of London, Vienna, St. Petersburg and Florence to invoke the mediation of the neutral Powers. In Vienna he met his old acquaintance Ranke, and in conversation he asked him with whom Germany was really at war now after the fall of the Napoleonic dynasty; the witty and learned historian immediately replied: "With Louis XIV". But Bismarck was not slow to frustrate Thiers' mission by his second circular of the 16th, in which he said: "It is impossible to believe that the present rulers of France earnestly intend to put a term to the war, seeing that they continue to stimulate popular passions in the country, to augment the hatred and bitter animosity of the population, irritated, as it is, by the sufferings inevitably attendant on war, and to condemn in anticipation all terms which might be accepted by Germany as inadmissible by France." "And in addition," he continued, "the hope for material or diplomatic intervention on the part of the neutral Powers in favour of France, which is encouraged by those at present in power, constitutes a serious impediment to the French in fully recognizing the necessity of concluding peace. As soon as the French nation clearly understands that as they alone provoked the war, and as Germany has had to fight it out alone, so they alone must settle accounts with Germany alone, so soon will they put an end to their resistance, which has become entirely futile. The neutral Powers are guilty of cruelty to the French nation, if they allow the government of Paris to prolong the war by encouraging in their people hopes of intervention that are doomed to disappointment."

These two circulars laid down the terms of peace in such a manner as to exclude all foreign intervention. Thiers was everywhere

¹ "Europe does not wish a change of master."



LOUIS ADOLPHE THIERS.

met with courteous but regretful shrugging of shoulders, but no help. Italy and Russia, on the other hand, took advantage of the favourable moment to gain their long and ardently desired ends. On the 7th of September the cabinet of Florence informed the other Powers that it would occupy all the points in the Papal States necessary for the security of both the Pope and of Italy; and as Pope Pius IX flatly declined to come to an understanding with King Victor Emanuel, General Cadorna crossed the frontiers at the head of 60,000 men, made a breach in the walls of Rome on the 20th, and immediately the Eternal City welcomed her conqueror with boundless exultation. Immediately after the General had held his entry, Count Arnim, the German ambassador, paid him a visit, and was thus the first to recognise Rome as the new capital of Italy. On the 29th of September Russia in her turn surprised the world by the curt



LEON GAMBETTA.

announcement that she declined to be bound any longer by the terms of the 1856 Treaty of Paris which limited her powers of sovereignty in the Black Sea. This arbitrary breach of international obligations caused great alarm and indignation in London and in Vienna. Bismarck, too, notwithstanding his previous agreement with Russia on this point, did not conceal his disapproval of the method adopted in St. Petersburg. To prevent the outbreak of new complications he proposed a conference of the signatories of the treaty of peace of 1856, at which Prussia, which was less affected by the terms of the treaty than England, Austria and France, might have the opportunity of exercising a conciliatory influence towards all parties. This Conference met on the 17th of January, 1871, solved the point in

dispute in a satisfactory manner by annulling the clause which was galling to Russia and agreeing on the principle, that, without the consent of the Great Powers, no important change in international relations was admissible.

The rulers of France were considerably exercised by the question whether they ought to take part in a conference convoked and presided over by Prussia. They determined to send a representative, and selected Jules Favre for that post, but after all he remained in Paris, under the pretext that he was indispensable at his post, and not till after the conclusion of peace did France join the Conference. The real grounds of Favre's reluctance to appear at the Congress were threefold: 1st, his dislike of the subordinate part he would presumably have to play there; 2nd, the conviction that nothing would be gained towards the alleviation of the present distress of France, since the representative of Germany had been instructed to quit the con-



CASTLE FERRIÈRES.

ference, if the question of the French war were mooted; and 3rd, the insecurity of the government represented by him, which might any day be overthrown by a new revolution.

This last point was also a cause of great perplexity to Germany, who did not know with whom to negotiate the terms of peace so ardently longed for. The present rulers of France were usurpers without regular recognition at home or abroad, and the only power entitled to decide on the fate of the country was a National Assembly freely elected; yet this was just the thing that the men in power most dreaded for the maintenance of their office.

Gambetta considered that the Republic ought first to be firmly established by a revolutionary dictatorship, and he therefore postponed the elections already fixed for the 2nd of October.

Where then was the authority able to contract an agreement of legal validity? It thus occurred to Bismarck to arrive at the conclusion of peace by opening negotiations with Napoleon, the prisoner at Wilhelmshöhe. The latter's semi-official paper, the "*Indépendant Rémois*", pointedly remarked, that so far Germany had recognized no French government except that of the Emperor Napoleon III, who in the eyes of Germany, was the only power authorized to contract liabilities of international validity. With that government or with a regency instituted by it, or even with Marshal Bazaine, who had received the chief command from the hands of the Emperor, Germany might open negotiations, but it was inconceivable by what title the German governments could treat with the men in power, who only represented a fragment of the Left of the whilom Legislative Assembly. In fact, if, as was quite possible, the Government of National Defence should fall with the next insurrection,

then there would be in all France no other organized power except the Army of Metz, and its Commander-in-Chief would alone have the right to negotiate. But both the Emperor at Wilhelmshöhe and his consort at Hastings in England rejected all peace-proposals on the basis of a cession of territory as sternly as the Parisians themselves. Then a certain M. Regnier presented himself at Versailles, pretending to have been sent by the Empress and by Bazaine, but Bismarck soon saw through the imposture, and so there was no alternative left but to open negotiations with the Provisional Government.

Under the increasing distress of the besieged capital the resolution of the Paris government seemed now to be giving way. Without waiting for Thiers' return they induced Lord Lyons, the British ambassador, to enquire of Bismarck whether and with whom he was willing to enter on a discussion. On his replying that he was ready to meet any one invested with authority by the French government, Jules Favre came from Paris, and on the 19th September the two statesmen met in the small château of Haute Maison at Montry. There, and next day at Ferrières, Rothschild's country seat, two interviews took place, which Bismarck treated as of a strictly private character. They mainly turned on the concession of an armistice, during which the National Assembly should meet and elect a permanent government, with which peace negotiations could be entered upon. In return for the concession of the desired armistice Bismarck asked: Firstly, with respect to Paris, either the surrender of an important part of the works of fortification or a continuance of the military *status quo*; secondly, the continuance of hostilities before Metz; and thirdly, the surrender of Strassburg with its garrison as prisoners of war, and of Toul and Bitsch with free departure of their garrisons. With respect to the terms of peace he declared certain cessions to be indispensable. "Strassburg," he said, "is the key to our house, we must have it, and in addition the two departments of the Upper and Lower Rhine, Metz with the surrounding country, Château-Salins and Soissons. I know perfectly well," he continued, "that the inhabitants of those places do not want us, it will be a burden for us, but we cannot do otherwise than take them." "Never," exclaimed Favre, "will we accept these terms. We may perish as a nation, but we will not be dishonoured." He offered "all the money we have," but cessions were derogatory to the honour of France. "I failed," states Bismarck, "to convince him that conditions such as France had obtained from Italy ¹ and demanded of Germany ² without being at war with these countries, conditions which she would certainly have exacted of us if we had been defeated, could inflict no dishonour on a country that had bravely defended itself, and that French honour was in no way of a different quality from that of all other nations. Just as little could I persuade Favre that the rendition of Strassburg would be as little dishonourable to France as that of Landau or Saarlouis would have been to us, and that the violently effected conquests of Louis XIV were as little bound up with the honour of France, as those of the First Republic or of the First Empire." ³ To the Chancellor, Favre appeared to be acting a histrionic part,

¹ Savoy and Nice taken from Italy in 1859, as the price of Napoleon's help against Austria. [*Trs.*]

² Napoleon III had repeatedly before the war, asked German territories of Prussia, in return for his allowing her to annex lands belonging to her German allies. [*Trs.*]

³ These were surrendered by France in 1815. [*Trs.*]

so as to move his compassion. "You ought to know," the Chancellor remarked, "mental outbursts have no part in politics." On another occasion the Chancellor, in one of his long-winded harangues, said: "He began to treat me as if I were a public man."

Considering the advantages gained, the German terms were fully justified. Nevertheless the Paris Government rejected them unconditionally. Once more they proposed the formula: "Not an inch of our territory, not a stone of our fortresses!" The impudent demands one can only reply by war to the knife" was the message sent by the Delegation of three members, which the Government, previous to the investment of Paris, had sent to Tours, so as to keep up their communications with the provinces; and Gambetta's first step, when he descended from his balloon, terra firma, was to annul again the decree fixing the date for the election of the National Assembly for the 16th of October. The rejoinder to this was from Count Bismarck-Bohlen, who had been appointed Governor-General of Alsace: "From this day forward Strassburg is and remains a German city." The retention of Strassburg was to the statesman and to the strategist a political and military necessity; to the German people the symbol and token of the new birth of their country and of its resurrection to national power and influence.

The French rulers, untaught by all their failures and disasters, obstinately clung to the belief that the neutral powers would at last be forced to make an intervention in their favour. Beust was no doubt ready enough for such an intervention. Granville, anxious to avoid anything resembling the exercise of pressure upon which would drive this latter Power into the arms of Russia, declined to give superfluous and unacceptable advice to the belligerents." The accusation against the Delegation at Tours, that Prussia wished to protract the war, so as to reduce France to a second-rate power, was scouted everywhere, being the exact opposite of the truth. It was not lust of conquest, not thirst for revenge, still less the desire to dismember France that had inspired Bismarck's utterances; with his whole heart he shared the longing of all the Germans for the conclusion of this murderous war; he was determined that the result attained should be commensurate with the sacrifices that had been made. When, then, the North-American General Burnside, moved by pure philanthropy, desired to enter the besieged city and offer his services, Bismarck gladly consented, and declared that he was ready to concede the terms necessary to hold the popular elections, but the Provisional Government of France repulsed the proffered hand. Bismarck now, by circular dated October 4th, 1870, threw all responsibility for the inevitable disaster that would overtake Paris, in case the siege should be prolonged till all stores were exhausted, and threw it on those who, by incessant instigation and deliberate falsehoods urged on the populace to persevere in useless resistance. This furnished the Prime-Minister of England, supported by other neutral Powers, with the opportunity of urging the Provisional Government to conclude an armistice for the purpose of convoking a Constituent Assembly, and towards the conclusion of peace. This was certainly something very different from what the Paris Government had intended, but still it could not be rejected.

Thiers was thus, after his return from his futile visits, able to obtain leave to enter Paris with the consent of the Germans, to make his report to the Paris Government and to request authority for the conclusion of an armistice. To some extent the rulers in Paris were also influenced by the report that Bismarck



TOURS.

sent General Boyer to Versailles, and that a restoration of the Empire was near at hand. The situation was, however, very unfavourable for the French negotiator. On the day when he appeared at the German head-quarters, viz., on the 31st of October, the insurrection broke out in Paris, and it hung upon a thread that Bismarck's words to Favre, "If we do not take Paris in a few days, you will be swept away by a popular emeute," did not prove truly prophetic. This was followed by the fall of Metz and by Gambetta's proclamation charging Bazaine with treason, and once more insisting on "War to the Knife." Nevertheless Thiers found the Germans ready to conclude an armistice, and even to consent to the participation of the inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine in the proposed elections. The negotiations led to no result, because the French demanded that Paris should be liberally re-provisioned, and refused all counter-concessions, such as, for example, the surrender of one or two forts. The preposterous demand that the Germans should forego all the advantages they had gained at the cost of two months' strenuous efforts and should return to the state of things prevailing at the commencement of the siege, clearly proved that the rulers of France did not really desire a popular assembly, nor yet an armistice, and that they had proposed terms wholly unacceptable, merely to avoid offending the neutral Powers, whose support they needed, by a flat refusal. Upon Bismarck desiring to make one more attempt at arriving at an understanding on other bases, Thiers had an interview with Favre and Ducrot at the outposts on the 5th of October, but was instructed by them to break off the negotiations.

Gambetta and his coadjutor Freycinet based their hopes upon the popular war

that had been evoked on the Loire, and Paris relied on her impregnability at the commencement of the bombardment, which undeceived her. Now the members of the diplomatic corps of Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, Holland and the United States all complained energetically, that they had not been forewarned of the intended bombardment in time to enable them to take measures for the protection of their countrymen, and they demanded according to the recognized law of nations that Paris be put in a position to provide for their safety and for that of their property. Bismarck pointed out to them, that "it had no parallel in modern history, that the capital of a great country should be converted into a fortress; that this must unavoidably lead to regrettable consequences, which must, however, be borne by those who voluntarily had during war time made their home in the fortress."

While the death-rattle of the proud city was thus already beginning to be itself heard, the question of the constitution of Germany was approaching its desired solution. The blood poured out in common had washed away the ancient determined boundary of the river Maine. The conviction that permanent insurrection alone could secure for the future of Germany the results of this time of sacrifice and heroic deeds, had gained ground far and wide, in a way which would have been time before have appeared impossible. Herr Blankenburg, a rigid Prussian conservative, wrote immediately after the battle of Wörth: "That the Bavarians under the command of our Crown Prince should have coöperated in dealing the first blow, supplies the solution of the German problem." In Bavaria too, the patriotic sentiment had gained in breadth and depth, but, on the other hand, the glorious successes of the Bavarians in the victories had raised their sense of their own importance and of influence regarded it less as an occasion for the unification of Germany than as a proof of the fitness of Bavaria for complete independence. The disposal of the conquered provinces was also much discussed by the same parties. They would have been glad to have seen Alsace united to Baden, provided the Baden palatinate, which was unattainable in 1816, was joined to Bavaria. They were aware that the real security of South Germany consisted in her security against renewed French aggression. A difference of opinion existed between King Louis of Bavaria and his counsellors. When, towards the middle of September, a memorandum of the Saxon Government arrived at Munich, advocating a constitutional union of the South German States, with the North German Confederation, and the same question was also earnestly considered at Stuttgart, the Bavarians thought it wisest to anticipate the inevitable by measures of their own. They sent to Berlin a formal request that the existing international situation between North and South Germany should be superseded by a constitutional federation, and thereupon the Minister of State, Delbrück, was sent to Munich on the 21st of October to discuss the matter fully. The only instructions given him were to avoid any utterance which might convey the impression that Prussia wished to exert the faintest pressure on the free resolve of a faithful and tried ally. This principle Bismarck adhered to during the whole of the negotiation, even when the hopes of Bavaria's complaisance seemed for a time doomed to remain unfulfilled. For King Louis II, with his strong sense of princely dignity, pressed for the smallest possible limitation of the independence of Bavaria, for a considerable relaxation of the terms of the North German Confederation, and above all for independence of the diplomatic and judicature of Bavaria. Happily for Germany, the three other

German governments, partly from jealousy of Bavaria, took a different course. In Württemberg a decided change in favour of national union had been marked by the resignation of the Minister von Varnbühler and the appointment in his place of Von Mittnacht; moreover, the October elections proved by the total discomfiture of the particularist party that the people's sympathies were in favour of the change. Neither the cabinet of Stuttgart, nor those of the other South German states desired to be taken in tow by Bavaria, but preferred to side with Prussia. The discussions with Delbrück led to no immediate result, but they produced in Munich the impression that too long a delay on the part of Bavaria might easily prove detrimental to her own position. Indeed Baden had as early as the 2nd of October formally applied for admission into the North German Confederation, and Württemberg and Hessen were about to follow suit. Bavaria then could not stay behind unless she was prepared to run the risk of being excluded from the Zollverein (custom's union), and having to submit unconditionally to avoid this latter contingency. When then, upon the urgent request of Württemberg, the seat of the negotiations was transferred to Versailles. Bavaria sent as her representatives Count Bray and Herr von Lutz; the North German governments were represented by the Saxon Minister von Friesen, and there were also present by invitation of Bismarck, Herren von Blankenburg, von Bennigsen and von Friedenthal, who were the leaders of the "National Party" of North Germany. Nevertheless, the Bavarians again here raised so many and such various difficulties, that they came very near a refusal to enter the Confederation. Now, Bismarck, on the 6th of November, met at a conference the representatives of the other three German states and speedily arranged with them the bases of the new German Confederation. But at the eleventh hour, when within sight of port, the scheme was threatened with shipwreck, as a court intrigue at Stuttgart, prompted by King Louis,



VON MITTNACHT.

caused the Württemberg government to instruct their representatives, von Mittnacht and the War Minister von Sukow, not to act except jointly with their Bavarian colleagues. Both hastened home in consternation, and by handing in their resignations, prevailed on their King to revoke those orders; nevertheless the consequence was that, on the 15th, only Baden and Hesse signed the new treaty, binding themselves to join the new German Confederation from Jan. 1st, 1871. Bavaria persisted in holding back, and King Louis even left unanswered an appeal by letter addressed to him by the Grand Duke of Baden. The Crown Prince Frederick William, growing impatient, had on the 16th of November a warm altercation with Bismarck, in which he demanded that Prussia should make use of her superior

power, and remarked that a mere threat would be sufficient to bring about the submission of Bavaria and Württemberg. But Bismarck very justly rejoined that it was impossible in the midst of war to use force against one's own allies, that the King would never be prevailed upon to consent to such a measure, His Majesty, like himself, being firmly determined to rely, in this German question, on the Princes, thus divesting it of the revolutionary and democratic tendencies derived from past history. This great statesman, far-seeing as ever, clearly felt that with the large majority of the Bavarian people the national aspirations were but temporary, and created by peculiar circumstances, that they were deep-rooted only with the educated classes, and he foresaw that after the restoration of peace the clerical-particularistic party would regain the upper hand, and that if force were now used the remembrance of it, and the grudge and embitterment might easily prove a source of very serious danger to the scarcely yet established German Unification.



PRESIDENT SIMON.

In actual fact too, the object was gained by friendly means. When, without regard to those holding aloof, the North German Diet (Reichstag) had been convoked for the 24th of November to discuss the new German constitution, and when Prussia and the other states had for two whole weeks continued their deliberations independently of Bavaria, Munich took the alarm. On the 23rd the treaty was signed at Versailles with Bavaria, and two days later also with Württemberg. Bismarck, referring to the concession made to these two Powers, and especially to Bavaria, says: "The newspapers will not be satisfied, and a commonplace historian may find fault with our agreement; he may say: 'The stupid fellow! he

could have demanded more and would have got it; they must have submitted'; he may be right with his 'must,' but I was more anxious to please these people. What is the worth of treaties which are forced upon you? I know that they have gone away delighted; I did not wish to press them, to make the most of my opportunity. The treaty is not perfect, but it is all the firmer for it. I consider it amongst the most important of our achievements during all these years."

Now Simon, the president of the Reichstag, was in the position to greet the assembled members on the 24th with these words: "Whilst far away the war is still being carried on in order to secure its ultimate end, let us meanwhile here at home endeavour to garner in at once one of its noblest and most glorious fruits, the unification of our fatherland in constitutional liberty. This universal uprising of the nation has swept away the boundaries that used to sever us. The old curse is removed;

and the glad consciousness thereof is the sure pledge of our happy future, of joy and prosperity in the works of peace."

There remained yet to be settled the designation of the Chief of the new Empire. Too many painful remembrances were associated with the title of Emperor of the whilom "Roman Empire of the German Nation" for much enthusiasm to prevail in its favour; and yet this was the very title which, as in 1848 so also now, obtruded itself unsolicited to the sense of the masses. Who, indeed, could hold command over German Kings, Princes and Free Cities, if not an Emperor? The Crown Prince of Prussia seems to have been the first to claim this title; his sense of his princely rank seems to have inspired him with the idea of the German Empire. Bismarck too, albeit at first little in favour of the resuscitation of the ancient title, allowed himself to be persuaded by the Crown Prince in a conversation at Pont-à-Mousson, to recommend it to the King as the natural consequence of the late events; he only wished, thoroughly appreciating as he did the latter's views, that the first impulse should not come from Prussia, but from the South-German Kings; for strange to say, no one was more opposed to the Imperial title than he who was intended to bear it. Slowly and gradually the convincing arguments of his son had their effect upon him; and Bismarck too, when once his adherence to the scheme was gained, laboured with his wonted energy for its realisation. To the Bavarian negotiators at Versailles he pointed out that it surely must be more fitting for their King to concede certain rights to the Emperor than to the King of Prussia. When objections were raised to the title "Emperor of Germany", as implying a supremacy over the land itself, he unhesitatingly approved of the title "German Emperor". At the same time he gave the Princes to understand that, if the offer of the Imperial Crown did not come speedily from them, it would not be possible to restrain the Reichstag beyond the beginning of December from making the proposal. Nevertheless, King Ludwig's Royal pride rebelled against himself aiding in the elevation of the house of Hohenzollern to a rank higher than that of the house of Wittelsbach. When Bismarck, in a confidential letter, asked him, as Sovereign of the greatest German state after Prussia, to offer the Imperial Crown to King William, he did not comply till King John of Saxony declared that, if Bavaria held back, he would undertake that commission himself. But King Ludwig could not bring himself to the point of drawing up this important instrument personally, and asked Bismarck to compose it; he then copied it and sent it back to Versailles as a Royal letter.

This protracted suspense made the Reichstag impatient. Time was pressing, for it was to be closed by the 10th of December. Then the Grand Duke of Weimar instructed his Minister, Stichling, by telegraph from Versailles, forthwith to make a motion to that effect in the Bundesrat, and Delbrück received similar instructions from Bismarck. On the 9th the Bundesrat, and on the 10th the Reichstag, unanimously passed the treaties with the South German states, and the Reichstag sent a deputation to Versailles with an address to King William, drawn up by Lasker in terms of burning enthusiasm, entreating him to accept the Imperial Crown. But the King, anxious to avoid the appearance of receiving the Crown from the Reichstag, postponed receiving the deputation till the 18th of December, when, as the fruit of renewed exhortation, Prince Luitpold of Bavaria was able at last to bring the consent of all the German Sovereigns.

There were still wanting the votes of the South German parliaments. Baden, Hesse, and Württemberg gave their votes unhesitatingly before the end of the year; the same was done by the lower house of Bavaria after a masterly speech by Prince Hohenlohe. But in the Bavarian Second Chamber the so-called "Patriots" made a last desperate effort to prevent the new creation of an Empire, with a Protestant Emperor at its head. Indeed, after the committee had voted the rejection of the measure by 12 votes to 3, there seemed really no prospect of the two-thirds' majority required for its passing, voting in favour of it; but at the eleventh hour,



PRINCE LUITPOLD OF BAVARIA.
(After a drawing by A. v. Werner.)

under the pressure of popular excitement, a few patriots fell away, and on the 21st of January the Second Chamber also accepted the treaties of Versailles with a majority of 102 to 48 votes.

It had originally been intended that the solemn proclamation of the Empire should take place on the 1st of January, 1871, but the formalities of Bavaria caused the postponement. King William himself would have preferred to have waited till after the conclusion of the war, "not to forestall the decrees of Providence," but being urged by the Crown Prince not to wait for the decision at Munich, it was determined to select the 18th of January, being the 170th anniversary of the creation of the Kingdom



THE IMPERIAL FLAG.

of Prussia.^{*} In the brilliant *salle des glaces* of the palace of Versailles, where so often evil plans had been conceived and elaborated against divided and helpless Germany, now stood forth the aged German King, surrounded by the Princes of his House, a large number of German Sovereigns, and a brilliant retinue of statesmen and generals, to redress the wrongs of centuries. The solemn ceremony commenced with a short act of Divine Service, when a sermon was preached on the 21st Psalm; next His Majesty read out the instrument constituting the Empire, and commanded Bismarck, now the Imperial Chancellor, to read the Proclamation to the German People. It concluded with the ever memorable words: "May God vouchsafe to

us and to our successors ever to be increasers (Mehrers) of the German Empire, not by warlike conquests, but with the boons and gifts of peace for the national welfare, freedom and civilization!" The Grand Duke Frederick of Baden was the first to propose a hurrah for the Emperor William, and the Crown Prince as the First Subject of the Empire bent his knee to kiss the Emperor's hand, but the father raised him up and embraced him with deep emotion.

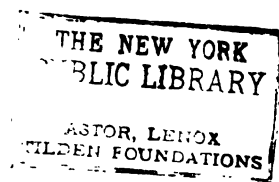
Now when the unification of Germany was completed Bismarck felt that the time had come for the realization of the plan he had formed immediately after the battle of Königgrätz, viz., to replace the disastrous hegemony of Austria in Germany by a close bond of friendship between the two Powers. "The anticipated satisfaction of the needs and aspirations of the German people," he wrote to Vienna on the 14th of December, "will confer on Germany a permanence and security in her future national life, which all Europe, and especially her neighbours, will be able to contemplate, not only without anxiety, but with approval and satisfaction. The unhindered development of the national interests which connect the countries and nations with so many bonds, will react beneficially on our political affairs. We may confidently anticipate that Germany and Austria-Hungary will regard each other with sentiments of mutual good will, and will join hands in promoting the welfare and prosperity of both countries." Beust could not do otherwise than accept the friendly hand thus held out to him, and the foundation was laid of the future Triple-Alliance, which became the powerful guarantee of the peace of Europe.

^{*} The Prince-Elector, Frederic III of Brandenburg, "an expensive Herr," as Mr. Thos. Carlyle calls him, engaged to come to the assistance of his liege Lord, the Emperor Leopold I, with 8000 men against Louis XIV in the Spanish War of Succession, on condition of the Emperor conferring on him the title of King. The Emperor complied, and on the 18th of January, 1701, Frederick III of Brandenburg became Frederick I, King of Prussia. His solemn coronation was an event pregnant with fate. When Prince Eugene, the Emperor's famous Marshal, heard of it he exclaimed: "The Imperial Ministers who advised the Emperor to recognize the King of Prussia deserve hanging." In the short period of 170 years Hapsburg was superseded by Hohenzollern, and it was proved that Eugene was a far-sighted statesman as well as a most eminent soldier. [Trs.]



COUNT VON BISMARCK READING THE PROCLAMATION OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE.

[face p. 616.



Whilst Versailles was the scene of the great historic events just recorded, the resistance of the Parisians was spent, in spite of the grand eloquence of Gambetta and of the French press. Favre was once more constrained to make the painful journey to the German head-quarters, and to renew the negotiations interrupted at Ferrières. Bismarck received him somewhat roughly, and roundly told him that negotiations on the basis of "Not an inch of our territories, not a stone of our fortresses" were entirely out of the question. "Why, in fact, should I negotiate with you at all?" he asked; "why should I give to your republic an appearance of legality, by concluding a treaty with you? Moreover, you are too late. There behind that door is waiting an ambassador of Napoleon III, and it is with him that I intend to negotiate."—"I will accept any terms you like," exclaimed Favre, "only do not inflict on France, after all her disasters, the dishonour of having to endure the yoke of a Bonaparte." All his resistance was now overcome, and although greatly distressed, he yet conceded both principles; Cession of territory and Payment of a war indemnity. Bismarck told none of his people the result of this interview, he only whistled softly the Halali,¹ and they knew that the game was run down. During the days immediately following, the negotiations were continued, and Favre with all his patriotism, and in spite of his frequent consultations with his colleagues, was everywhere at a disadvantage, owing to his inexperience as a statesman. But he resolutely stuck to his guns and carried at least two points: 1st, in the teeth of Bismarck's warnings, it was conceded that the National Guards should retain their arms; and 2nd, that during the armistice Paris was not to be occupied by the Germans, the city paying a sum of money instead. "Paris," said Bismarck, "is a mighty and wealthy lady, and her ransom ought to be a sum worthy of her greatness; it would be unseemly, methinks, to quote it at a less figure than a milliard (= £ 40,000,000)."² Finally, however, he consented to accept fr. 200,000,000 (= £ 8,000,000). On the 26th negotiations had proceeded far enough for it to be settled that with the ensuing midnight firing should cease; on the evening of the 28th a three weeks' armistice was signed, to enable the government of the National Defence to convoke a freely elected assembly to meet at Bordeaux and decide on the question of Peace or War.² Both the belligerent armies retained their positions. All the forts of the outer defences of Paris with all their war matériel were surrendered to the Germans, and the artillery was withdrawn from the walls. With the exception of one Division of 12,000 men, necessary for internal security, the

¹ A flourish of the huntsmen's bugles when the quarry is run down. [*Trs.*]

² Lieutenant-Colonel von Bernhardt narrates: "During the winter I was, on and off, jointly with some comrades of my squadron (von Uslaar, Baron von Salis), officer of a party with a flag of truce, and had the good fortune of being thus engaged whilst negotiations for the armistice were in progress. In the morning I received the French plenipotentiaries at the bridge over the Seine, and in the evening I escorted them back again. During the day I had to do the honours to a certain Count d'Herrison d'Irison, at meals I joined him and the other Frenchmen at Count Bismarck's table, in the well-known room lighted with stearin candles stuck into empty champagne bottles. In this manner I dined at Bismarck's on the evening when the armistice was signed. At the head of the long table the Chancellor sat, at his right Jules Favre. During dinner both discussed theoretically the comparative merits of republican and monarchical governments; Bismarck in short, abrupt, and weighty remarks, Favre rhetorically and theatrically; a most characteristic scene. After dinner the folding-doors were flung wide open, and in the adjoining room deeds and documents lay spread out on a long green table. A clerk entered and announced

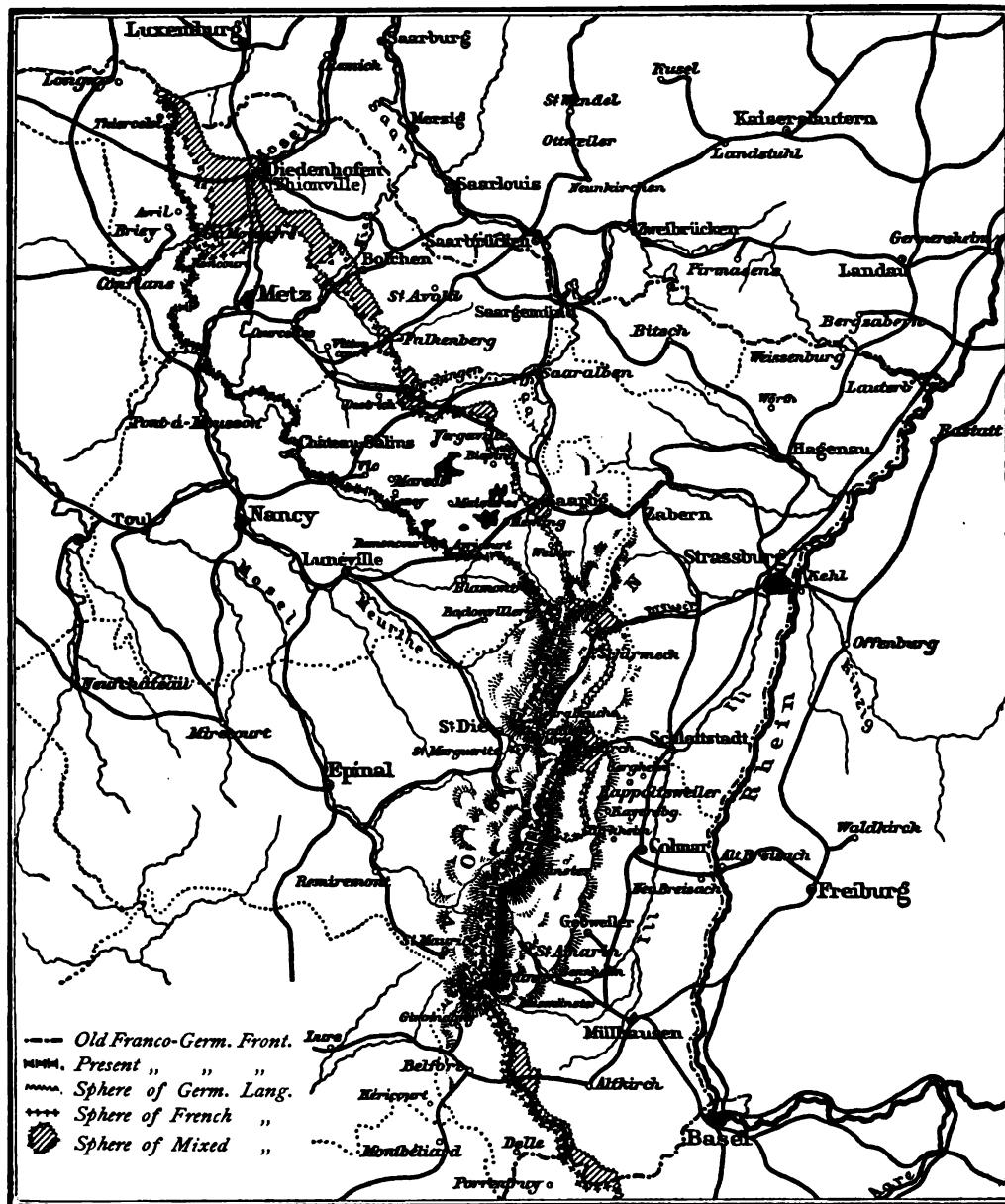
garrisons of the city and of the forts were prisoners of war, but were allowed to remain in Paris. The departments of Côte d'Or, Doubs and Jura were in express terms excluded from the armistice, and thus it came about that the last scenes of the mighty war drama were enacted in those districts, and terminated with Bourbaki's army taking refuge on Swiss soil.

Bismarck's misgivings lest Gambetta should not accept the settlement arrived at were speedily confirmed. In a passionately worded edict, full of reproaches against the Paris Government, he unrestrainedly called for a continuation of the contest, and published on the 1st of February a decree, by which he arbitrarily excluded from the elections for the National Assembly all those who had served under the Emperor Napoleon III. Immediately Bismarck lodged an energetic protest against this regulation, which was irreconcilable with the liberty of the elections guaranteed in the armistice, and would have deprived the assembly of just the calm and peaceful elements so much needed. Neither could the Paris government tolerate a regulation which meant civil war. Jules Simon was sent to Bordeaux as their commissioner to insist on its revocation; Gambetta refused to comply, so Jules Simon declared it to be null and void, and Gambetta—the "madman," as Thiers called him—sent in his resignation.

The result of the elections clearly proved that the country was sick of the war. The National Assembly met at Bordeaux on the 12th of February. After setting aside a protest read out by M. Keller, an ultramontane representative from Alsace, against the surrender of his native land to the foreigner, the Assembly expressly accepted the principle of a cession of territory; peace, anxiously longed for, not being obtainable without this sacrifice. Thiers, appointed on the 17th as the Chief of the Executive, was commissioned, jointly with the ministers Favre and Picard, to conduct the peace negotiations. For this purpose the armistice was prolonged, first to the 26th of February, and afterwards again to the 12th of March. The cession of Alsace was conceded, although reluctantly, but that of German Lorraine with Metz encountered all the more difficulty. Thiers proposed to raze the fortifications, and even offered Luxemburg, which, he alleged, could be obtained from the King of Holland. Bismarck rejected both offers; the latter because of the international complications which it might cause, and the former because such servitude would be felt more keenly by the French than the total loss. But Bismarck himself was urgent for a speedy conclusion of the negotiations, as any moment might bring telegraphic news of English, or other

that all was ready. Bismarck rose, and all of us naturally followed suit; he now invited Favre to enter, and a new discussion arose between them. Favre begged once more to include Bourbaki's army in the armistice, but Bismarck refused. "Well then," begged Favre, "at least Garibaldi's troops." Thereupon Bismarck rejoined, and I remember his words distinctly: "Je n'ai pas de cœur pour cet homme là; c'est un brigant" (I have no heart for that fellow, he is a brigand), and he added that he would be glad if Manteuffel should succeed in taking him. Thereupon both passed through the folding-doors, which were closed behind them. I now ordered the carriages and escorts to get ready to accompany the Frenchmen back to Paris. When I again entered the room, Bismarck and Favre also came in, the latter bathed in tears, gesticulating with his long arms, the very image of wretchedness. Bismarck accompanied him to the door where I stood, and there took leave of him. Jules Favre, his voice choked with tears, thanked him for his chivalrous manner ("*manière chevaleresque*") in which he had conducted the negotiations. Thereupon we drove at a swinging trot to the bridge over the Seine at Sèvres which had been blown up, and in the dark night I escorted this gentleman across the river in a small boat.

intervention in favour of France. He therefore obtained the consent of his Emperor and of Marshal von Moltke to the retrocession of Belfort, or, if this fortress were left in the hands of the Germans, to forego the triumphal entry of the German army into



Scale: 25 English miles to 1 inch.

Paris. Thiers attached greater value to the recovery of Belfort than to keeping the Germans outside the walls of Paris. He begged for an audience of the Emperor in the hope of obtaining milder terms from him. His Majesty received him very

courteously, but remained inexorable. When Thiers declared the sum of six milliards (= £ 240,000,000) to be wholly impossible to be raised, Bismarck sent him two German financiers, the banker Bleichröder and Count Henkel von Donnersmark, who offered to bring about the payment, but to accept this proposal would have offended French vanity. Thiers offered two milliards (= £ 80,000,000), but Bismarck pointed out to him that this sum would not even cover the actual war expenses, to which had yet to be added pensions for the wounded, widows and orphans, rewards for the army, compensation to the Germans driven out of France, and for merchantmen captured at sea, and finally the maintenance of the prisoners of war. However, the Emperor consented to a reduction of the amount to five milliards (= £ 200,000,000).

Several times the discussions became very heated; on one occasion Thiers forgot himself so far as to exclaim in answer to one of Bismarck's demands: "*Mais c'est une indignité!*" (That is an indignity.) Immediately Bismarck began to speak German. Thiers listened in bewilderment and at last exclaimed in piteous tone: "*Mais, Monsieur le Comte, vous savez bien, que je ne sais point l'Allemand*" (But, Count, you know well that I don't know German). Immediately Bismarck resumed speaking French, and said: "When just now you spoke of an indignity, I was afraid that I did not know enough French, so preferred to speak German, when I understand what I say and am told." His adversary understood the lesson, and conceded that which he had just designated as an indignity.

On the 26th of February the preliminaries of peace were concluded. Bismarck signed it with a gold pen, a present from some manufacturers of Pforzheim^{*} to him for this special occasion. France agreed to the cession of Alsace, of German Lorraine with Metz, and to the payment of five milliards (£ 200,000,000). Only the western part of Paris, viz., from the Arc de Triomphe as far as the Rue St. Honoré was to be occupied by the Germans, whose number was not to exceed 30,000 men. The evacuation of French territory should be carried out in stages, in proportion as the payments were made; the eastern departments to be held by 50,000 Germans till the last instalment was paid. The French army was to retire behind the Loire and remain there till the definite conclusion of peace, but Paris was to retain a garrison of 40,000 men. The inhabitants of the ceded provinces were to enjoy certain commercial privileges, and were guaranteed full liberty of emigration. Negotiations for the definite conclusion of peace were to be opened at Brussels without delay.

The narrow limits drawn to the entry of the German troops, such as took place on the 1st of March, did not seem to the Germans an adequate recompense for all the sufferings they had endured, and grated against the feelings of the Parisians, as being the most grievous of all the humiliations. Thiers hastened to Bordeaux, anxious to shorten as much as possible the sorrow of the capital. The Left demanded the rejection of the terms of peace, but common-sense and the pressure of necessity prevailed, and the treaty was passed; 546 voting for, and 167 against its acceptance. Such haste was made in drawing up the documents, that on the 3rd March they were completed, and "the sacred soil of the capital was redeemed from its desecration by the unhallowed tread of the hordes of barbarians."

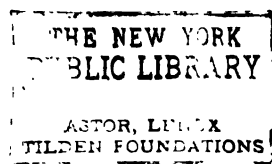
The peace negotiations opened in Brussels on the 28th of March, at which the

^{*} Pforzheim in Baden is famous for its jewelry work. [*Tfs.*]



BISMARCK NEGOTIATES WITH THIERS AND FAVRE AT VERSAILLES.
(By permission of the Photographic Society of Berlin.)

[face p. 620.



German Empire was represented by Count Harry Arnim and Baron Balan, made slow progress. When the French government fell into arrears with the payments for the support of the troops of occupation and offered terms of payment far less favourable than those agreed upon at Versailles, Bismarck began to suspect, what Favre afterwards confessed to have been true, that they entertained the hope of securing more favourable conditions when once they had recovered some strength again. This hope was frustrated by the insurrection of the Commune, nevertheless the Germans saw that the situation demanded precautionary measures. The return of French prisoners of war was stopped, the evacuation was retarded, so that the German forces in France should be strong enough to meet any eventuality, and Bismarck, who had allowed the French government troops for employment at Paris to be raised to 80,000 men, began to consider whether he ought not to put an end to all this uncertainty by occupying all Paris as a material guarantee, either by treaty with the Commune or by force. This exhibition of firmness had its effect. Upon Favre's entreaty for one more personal interview, the negotiations broken off at Brussels were resumed at the Swan Hotel in Frankfort on the Maine. The negotiators were the Chancellor Bismarck himself, and Favre, assisted by M. Pouyer-Quertier, the French Minister of Finance. On the 10th of May the definitive treaty was signed. The tract of land round Belfort left to France was slightly increased, this being compensated for by a corresponding change in the frontier by Thionville, so that the whole tract of land ceded by France amounted in round figures to 5600 square miles with 1,597,228 inhabitants. The latter were allowed liberty up to October 1st, 1874, to remove their domicile to France, all laws about military service notwithstanding. The conditions of the Preliminary Peace concerning the occupation of French territory, and in all essentials also the terms of payment, remained in force. After long hesitation Bismarck abandoned his demand to restore the treaty of commerce of 1862, and contented himself with the engagement that both countries should concede to each other all those commercial immunities which they allowed to England, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Austria and Russia. For the railways situated in the ceded territories the sum of 325,000,000 francs (£13,000,000) was deducted from the war indemnity. On the 21st of March, the day when the first Reichstag of United Germany was opened, Emperor William conferred on Bismarck the title of Fürst.¹

¹ The word "Fürst" is commonly translated by "Prince," but this is not strictly accurate. A German "Prinz" is always a member of a reigning family—we have in English no title corresponding to the German Fürst, who ranks below a Duke and above a Count. Bismarck himself did not desire the title, not being wealthy enough to support so exalted a rank. [Trs.]

PART IV

CHAPTER I

VERSAILLES AND HEAD-QUARTERS

By ANTON VON WERNER

Professor and Director of the Royal Academy of the Plastic Arts.

THE Great Head-Quarters formed the meeting-place of the greatest variety of men from King William down to the Privy Councillor Louis Schneider, the Editor of the "Feldsoldatenfreund", Dr. Hans Blum, the reporter of the "Daheim", and Mr. Havelock, the singular Englishman who was engaged in distributing among the German troops the charitable contributions of his countrymen. Residents at head-quarters were, as a rule, divided into two classes: the first comprised all those persons who had to be at the beck and call of the Commander-in-Chief, be it to meet the requirements of the war, or for other reasons; the second class included everybody else who had business at head-quarters, such as men of princely rank, representatives of foreign powers, civil servants who had to keep themselves ready for some definite purpose, most commonly to assume the government of the occupied provinces of the enemy; then there were correspondents of different papers, artists etc., etc. Members of the first class were prone to regard those of the second class as a "disturbing and intrusive element". In presence of military considerations all other matters had to give way.

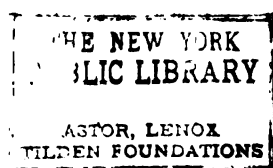
Thus the company at head-quarters was very mixed: this became palpably evident when on the move, where all, coming out, formed a motley crowd of vehicles and horses. The most elegant carriage was seen cheek by jowl with ramshackle conveyances and with the long hunting-trap of Von Verdy; the prize team of Prince von Pless, and horses of the royal studs were seen side by side with jaded nags. The vehicles of the chief postal officials and of the field-post generally led the van; these were followed by volunteer ambulance-bearers, the several military authorities, the War Office, the Great General Staff, the field-police, and the Court; the rear, at times some leagues behind, was brought up by the royal waggon-park and the office of the Chancellor. The line of vehicles, often many miles in length, was escorted by numerous cavalry, who scoured the country to the right and to the left with lance uplifted or sabres drawn. The escort round the royal carriage was naturally exceedingly numerous.

Incessantly they pushed forward; halt was made hardly once a day, and this merely to let the horses recover breath, or else to change them. During this respite



ON THE WAY TO PARIS.
(From an oil-painting by Anton von Werner.)

[face p. 622.]



breakfast was partaken of, consisting commonly of a piece of meat and of bread consumed in the carriage. In this manner all had to rough it, from the lowest up to the Royal War-Lord himself. Of the distances sometimes travelled let the following serve as an example: After a council held by the Great Head-Quarters in the evening, the company started at 5 o'clock in the morning from Meaux, and arrived at Ferrières at 11 o'clock at night.

All along the route Frenchmen lined the road, gazing at their conquerors, and the bearing of the aged, royal hero was noticed with universal admiration; nobody, however, would believe that the simple, beardless, slim, old man travelling, one of four, in an open carriage, without escort, was no less a man than Moltke himself, the "battle-thinker," the "General Staff" embodied in a single person.

Whenever it was possible the Great Head-Quarters put up in one of the larger towns, or extensive villages, or in some notable castle. Yet, under the pressure of necessity the accommodation was often scanty enough; as for example at Rezonville, after the battle of Gravelotte. There, Verdy reports, the General Staff occupied a house which had just been vacated by a medical detachment. In a narrow room, wrapped in their cloaks, the officers worked at a table littered with fragments of food and all sorts of rubbish, and lighted by candle-ends stuck into empty bottles. The King said that, on entering, he felt as if he had strayed into a robbers' den. The only two beds in the place were assigned to Moltke and another General, but all the other officers lay down in the stables along with the horses, on very suspicious straw, and their much needed rest was broken by the groans of the wounded near them, and by incessant callers seeking shelter. On the next morning Verdy performed his ablutions in a stable bucket in the open street of the village. King William's account of this night was: "I was content enough to bivouac, but, after some hours' search, a room was hunted up, where I took rest on the royal ambulance-cart, and not having brought with me from Pont-à-Mousson any part of my equipage, I have not been able to undress or change clothes for 30 hours. I thank God for having given us the victory."

After the excitement of the first entry was over, the seat of the Great Head-Quarters no way differed externally from any other French town, except by white flags hung out from the houses, with the inscriptions: "Office of the Chancellor," "War-Office," "Field-Police," "Great General Staff" etc., and by the presence of numerous officers and court-officials of high rank. The members of the Head-Quarters received their rations like every other soldier, but these were prepared by a skilful soldier acting as cook. In the large towns and cities the hotels were naturally put into requisition.

When the successes of the war led the Germans deeper into the country, and when, from the 19th of September on, they invested the capital of their enemy the eyes of the whole world were eagerly directed to Versailles, the centre of the events of the second part of the campaign. Its first part, of hardly four weeks' duration, had led to the most astounding results, but fate would have it that the second part, with its wanton sacrifice of blood and treasure, should last 7 times 4 weeks more, merely to enable the newly created French Republic to advertise itself.

Artistic commissions intrusted to me furnished me with the opportunity of going to Versailles and of witnessing in personal intercourse, or in contact with leaders and

rulers, the making of history at its very centre, or at its fountain-head. I had been away for eight years from Prussia, the land of my birth, and had lived in South Germany, France and Italy. I had become a stranger to Prussian ways, and now faced them with an unbiassed criticism.

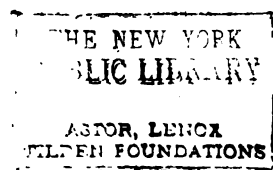
It was not easy in September and October of 1870 for an unattached civilian to get to Versailles, and like the rest I too had to possess my soul in patience till Strassburg had fallen, ere I could start on my journey, supplied, as I was, with a letter of recommendation from the Grand Duchess of Baden to her brother, the Crown Prince Frederick William, the Commander-in-Chief of the Third Army.

Kehl and Strassburg, and especially the Stein-suburb laid in ruins, presented a sad spectacle, and one who has not beheld such a hideous scene of destruction and devastation can hardly form an adequate conception of the horrors of war. Even the besiegers, the conquerors of the fortress, were filled with dismay. I overheard an artilleryman, contemplating the ruins, exclaim to his comrade: "I say, look here! what a pretty mess we have made of it!" The walls of the bastions, the lunettes, and the dismounted French guns, all testified to the precision of the aim of German artillery; some cannon bore the traces of having been hit just at the muzzle, and the walls were rent by gaping breaches. The railway-station too had been badly hit, and the rails were covered a foot deep with fragments of the glass roof of the large hall. One line of rails had been cleared, and after a detention of several days in Strassburg I succeeded in starting for Paris by one of the earliest trains on the "*Chemin de fer de l'Est*." I had often made that journey in former years—but it was then quicker and less exciting work than just now. Our train was over-full, more with civilians than with soldiers; many of the passengers were Frenchmen or Alsations, but principally they were German tradesmen bent on turning an honest penny outside Paris or Metz, by selling all sorts of supplies, such as butter, eggs etc. The journey through the long tunnel of the Vosges mountains, which strangely enough the French had neglected to destroy, filled us with apprehension. Step by step, slowly the engine panted forward into the gloom, to the right and to the left German soldiers and railway officials accompanied us torches in hand; from time to time the train stopped, and we in the waggons expected every moment some jerk or explosion of disagreeable effect; but at last our pent-up feelings were relieved with a deep sigh, when we issued into daylight again, and travelled along at a somewhat accelerated pace between wood-clad mountain-slopes with the blue sky over head. It took six to eight hours to go to Nancy, the temporary terminus of all railway travelling. The station, well known to me from former days, was astir with military bustle. On one side a train full of French prisoners, the garrison of Soissons, entered the station, bellowing the *Marseillaise*; on the other side entered a train of German Landwehrmen, singing "*Die Wacht am Rhein*", or simply outshouting the Frenchmen. On the platform Prussian foot-soldiers were drawn up, who gave to the French guests from Soissons a very demonstrative greeting by ostentatiously loading their rifles with ball-cartridge. One corner of the platform was filled right to the roof, with a seemingly inextricable pile of chests, barrels, mattresses etc.—all being charitable contributions waiting to be forwarded. Captain Max Jähns, an old friend of mine, who had been told off to the commission at Nancy, kindly stood by me, and made arrangements for the continuance of my journey to Epernay for the following morning. We arrived at 5 o'clock in the



IN QUARTERS ON THE LINE OF COMMUNICATIONS.
(By permission of the Photographic Society of Berlin.)

[face p. 624.



afternoon, but were once more compelled to stop over night. Grimm, the government assessor, brother of Professor Hermann Grimm, did the honours at this place, being captain of the Landwehr on the line of communication. Next day the weather was detestable, but still I was, at 5 o'clock in the morning, at the station, on the lookout for some train or other. I had to wait some 3 or 4 hours; but at last a train came in, and brought me most desirable travelling companions; there were two Ministers of State, Herr von Freydorff and Herr Jolly, and the Legation Councillor, Herr Hardegg, all of whom I had known at Karlsruhe; they were on their way to the Head-Quarters at Versailles, to give the final touches to the negotiations with South Germany. We travelled together via Château-Thierry as far as Nogent-l'Artaud.

The country between Epernay and Nogent-l'Artaud turned out to be peculiarly picturesque. To the right and to the left of the line were seen engines and waggons which had left the rail and lay in hopeless ruin, buried in the ground. Over extensive tracts of ground cattle lay dead, sometimes close to the line and in attitudes of actual life; elsewhere again lay heaps of oats in sacks, which had become soaked, and through the canvas green blades were sprouting with new life. At Nogent-l'Artaud our further progress was arrested. In the open railway hall a company of Bavarian foot-soldiers, down with dysentery, were waiting to be forwarded to the rear; it was a piteous sight. The ministers von Freydorff and Jolly applied to the commissary for a conveyance to take them on to Versailles, but were rudely rebuffed by him, in spite of their high official position. I, on the other hand, was more fortunate. I had observed near the station, in an open field, a long train of waggons in deep mud, and inferred that there would surely be among them some conveyance on the way to Paris or Versailles. A fortunate chance led me to the night quarters of Lance-sergeant Rössler of the army service corps. He was conductor of a supply column, plying incessantly to and fro between Nogent-l'Artaud and Versailles; this enabled me to continue my journey to Versailles on the day following, at least as far as Orly. This trip took me no less than three or four days, but it was interesting and instructive. Our column was a so-called "Wild Column," which meant that its 60 vehicles or so, and their drivers were not on the establishment of the army service corps, but were composed of peasants' carts and other private conveyances, and the drivers were mostly volunteers who devoted their valuable labours to the service of the country. Barring a few soldiers from the army service corps the column was escorted by 40 to 50 foot-soldiers, mostly Poles, as the country was not safe from surprise attacks by *Francs-tireurs*. The roads were sodden, and crowded with trains of ammunition, artillery and supplies; some full, on their way to the cantonments, and others empty on their way back, so that the task of the conductor to guide his column skilfully and bring his men in due time to their night quarters was beset with difficulties. In many places that we passed through, the inhabitants had not all fled, consequently accommodation was still to be procured for money, and the quarters which we occupied of an evening were quite intact; the walls were hung with pictures and the windows with curtains; in the elegant drawing-rooms the tables were covered with knick-knacks and on the mantelpieces stood the far-famed pendule-clocks of bronze or china, only fuel and light were hard to get. As soon as the train of vehicles had come up and the shoeless horses been taken to the smithies, care was devoted to making the quarters comfortable. Fir-cones and dry twigs were collected, and somewhere or

soldiers, and in front of the royal palace with its boastful inscription: "À toutes les gloires de la France" and with the proud statue of Louis XIV, the "Roi Soleil", on horse-back, there were drawn up German guns in close array, and the ground floor of the palace was devoted to the accommodation of our wounded; probably the most magnificent hospital imaginable. Among the pictures which adorned the walls of these rooms was one commemorating the meeting of Napoleon I with Queen Louise^{*} at Tilsit. What were the emotions that agitated King William's breast when, on visiting his wounded soldiers, these pictures met his gaze? In fine weather the lightly wounded men were brought out into the open air on their beds or on chairs, to enjoy the fresh air on the broad terrace in front of their sick-room. Sometimes all the fountains, "les grandes eaux," played, the military bands performed, and the King rode with a brilliant retinue of Princes and officers of high rank through the famous park. The only feature missing to complete the picture was the groups of thousands of Parisians who are wont to assemble on the lawn, the "tapis vert," on the "jour des grandes eaux". In the coffee-houses and in the restaurants the military element had taken the place of the civilians, our soldiers seeking refreshment and recreation when relieved after their four days of exhausting service at the outposts, and they indulged in enjoyments to which at home they would probably have remained strangers to the end of their days—I myself noticed soldiers in the Café de la France consume amazing quantities of caviare. The town must have done a good stroke of business during the time that it was occupied by German troops, for the good people of Versailles understood in times of war quite as well as in times of peace to treat their uninvited guests in a becoming manner.

King William, accompanied by his Great Head-Quarters and his Foreign Office had held his entry into Versailles on the 5th of October, but the presence of His Majesty made itself little felt outside. Occasionally, if the weather was fine, the King was seen on Sundays, after Divine service held in the church, in the palace yard; he there received reports from officers, or honoured some with his orders. The gentlemen immediately surrounding him and in his personal service were his aide-de-camp General von Boyen, Court Marshal Count Perponcher, Vice Senior Equerry von Rauch, Privy Cabinet-Councillor von Wilmowski, Surgeon-General Dr. von Lauer, the aides-de-camp Major Prince Radziwill, Count Lehndorff, von Alten, von Loucadou and others; even the well-known reader, Court Councillor Louis Schneider, was not absent. The Crown Prince Frederick William, accompanied by the chief officers in command of the Third Army, had held his entry some days before the King, immediately, in fact, after the investment on the 19th of September, and had taken up his quarters preliminarily at the prefecture, which was afterwards taken possession of by the King and those of his retinue in his immediate service. The Royal Head-Quarters were joined by several Princes not engaged in active military duties, viz., the Grand Dukes of Baden, Weimar, and Oldenburg, the Dukes of Coburg and of Meiningen, Prince Luitpold of Bavaria, Prince William of Württemberg, Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern, Prince Adalbert of Prussia etc. They formed the so-called "second class," and found convenient and comfortable accommodation in the extensive town with its beautiful houses and villas. The Foreign Office

* Queen Louise was King William's adored mother. Tilsit was the place of Prussia's deepest humiliation. [Trs.]

had taken possession of No. 14 of the Rue de Provence. The *personnel* comprised the Chancellor Count Bismarck, the Councillors of Legation Abeken and von Keudell, Lothar Bucher, Count Hatzfeldt and Count von Bismarck-Bohlen, subsequently also the Minister Delbrück, besides a great number of Decipherers and other officials. General von Moltke and the offices of the General Staff were housed at No. 38 Rue Neuve.

The first artistic commission I had to execute was "General von Moltke with his Staff before Paris," and this brought me in contact with the members of the Great General Staff, who beyond all doubt had learnt one thing of their great master, viz., SILENCE. The whole of that mighty and busy mechanism of the General Staff worked so exceedingly silently and unobtrusively, that the numerous newspaper reporters in Versailles must have been in permanent despair for having learnt or heard nothing worthy of being reported. I could not so much as get the material for a picture representing the Great General Staff, or even merely its leading members, in their official employment, either in council or in debate. Many years after 1870 I drew an illustration, "Council of War at Versailles", to accompany a poem of Fedor von Köppen. In this picture von Roon, the Minister of War, was the principal figure, but Count Moltke protested energetically, declaring that there was no historical basis for it, and that during the whole campaign no perplexity had ever arisen which required the summoning of a Council of War. He also contended that the place of the War-Minister was at the War-Office in Berlin, and not in Versailles in the retinue of the King.

The Crown Prince Frederick William with the Head-Quarter-Staff of the Third Army had taken up their quarters at the villa "Les Ombrages", belonging to Madame André. This lady was a pious Protestant, and her spacious villa was furnished with French taste in the most modern and most comfortable style. The walls of the parlour on the ground-floor, where the Crown Prince and his Staff were wont to assemble before and after meals, were covered right up to the ceiling, with white lackered wooden wainscoting, adorned with biblical texts, such as: "Vous êtes sauvés par grâce, par la foi, cela ne vient pas de vous, c'est un don de Dieu" etc. This room led into a spacious drawing-room with three windows, the walls and furniture of which were covered with some patterned material; adjoining this apartment was a small music-room, and on the side opposite to this was a large dining-room, affording accommodation for about 20 gentlemen, who, as a rule, daily dined at the Crown Prince's table, when duty did not require their attendance elsewhere. These gentlemen were: Lieutenant-General von Blumenthal, Chief of the Staff of the Third Army; Colonel v. Gottberg, Deputy-Quartermaster General; Count Eulenburg, the Court Marshal; Majors von Hahnke and Karnatz, Captains Lenke and von Sommerfeldt, and Lieutenant Bronsart von Schellendorff of the General Staff; Major von Winterfeldt, Commandant of Head-Quarters; the aides-de-camp, Major Mischke, Cavalry Captains von Schleinitz and Count Seckendorff; the Ordnance Officers, Count Harrach, von Stülpnagel, von Mutius, von Gustedt, von Blumenthal jr., and finally Major Dresow, Captains von Wolff and von Viebahn.

The villa, surrounded by an extensive park, was situated in a fairly open position at the south-east corner of the town, to the rear of the railway station of the Rive Gauche. A company of foot-soldiers was therefore always posted in the villa as a

protection to the Staff, and outposts were put out towards the plateau of Sarbory surrounding the park, the very plateau on which Gallifet afterwards had the Communards shot.

A sight of the Crown Prince was nothing new to me, as I had previously seen him in Berlin, and on my occasional visits to Karlsruhe; nevertheless he made an indelible impression on me when I once more beheld him at Versailles. When, on being invited to breakfast, I visited the Villa André for the first time, the Crown Prince was walking under the autumn-inted trees, engaged in earnest conversation with Herr von

Loggenbach, the former Baden minister, and his whole bearing had the stamp of sunny and manly beauty. The glamour of his glorious military achievements surrounded with a halo his healthful tall person; his sun-burnt countenance, radiant with gentleness and good will, shaded by his golden-yellow beard, was overflowing with health and beauty. Assuredly he was "the most glorious of all" the heroes assembled at those Head-Quarters where there was no lack of splendid men of Teutonic force. Even the Versaillese felt the charm of his presence, the amiability of his character. I often met the Crown Prince, accompanied by his Aide-de-camp, Mischke, walking up the Rue des Chantiers, to the prefecture, the King's quarters, but I never observed any scowls on the faces of the people, or overheard any hostile utterances—on the contrary, gazing at and admiring him, they would raise their hats, exclaiming: "Ah, le Prince Royal!" or "Voilà Fritz." No need to say that their salutations were so returned by the Prince with a kindly smile.

Towards the venerable old King, and especially towards Bismarck, the people observed a hostile bearing. I often noticed that Frenchmen even of the better classes, judge by the ribbon of the Légion d'Honneur in their button-holes, turned sharply



VILLA LES OMBRES, HEAD-QUARTERS OF THE CROWN PRINCE.
(From a sketch by A. v. Werner on 5th March 1871.)



SWORD, BELT, AND SASH WORN BY KING
WILLIAM, 1870/71.
(Hohenzollern Museum.)

round, muttering curses, [when they encountered] the King or Bismarck, in the open carriage in the broad Avenue de Paris, or at St. Cloud.

The princes at head-quarters who were not on active duty, but were merely present as spectators from the desire to become acquainted with war, or to be near their subjects engaged in warlike operations, were not regarded by military men, who were hard at work, with too much of good will. Only a small number of the ruling princes were an exception, above all the Grand Duke Frederick of Baden. The noble and distinguished self-abnegation of this German prince, who, in order to promote a great national aim, would have been ready to sacrifice his own eminent position unhesitatingly, and without petty *arrière pensée*, was proof sufficient that his presence in the camp was not prompted by mere curiosity, and that he was not a mere idle spectator who wished to add his presence to the brilliancy of the scene. Homage without stint was paid him from all sides, and his influence upon the course of events was beyond all doubt very weighty. Many of the princes proved themselves men of a pretty wit, such as the Prince of Rudolstadt, and the Hereditary Prince of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, and they were not slow to exercise it upon their peers, and their amateur soldiering. The real head-quarters of the second class was the Hôtel des Réservoirs, where they assembled to dinner at 7 o'clock in the evening. At one table, placed breadth-ways in the dining-room, sat the General Staff under the presidency of General von Moltke. At the middle table, placed lengthways, sat the princes, and at two other long tables the other officers were seated.

My own quarters were opposite the hôtel, with a Mr. Dietz, professor at the military school of St. Cyr, whom I had known in Paris. The deputy Mr. Bamberger lodged in the [same house; he had been



KING WILLIAM RIDES THROUGH THE PARK OF VERSAILLES.
(Designed by G. Koch, from a sketch made on the spot by A. von Werner).

[face p. 630.]

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summoned by Bismarck to Versailles, on account of his intimate acquaintance with French affairs, and he afforded me a great deal of interesting information. The Hereditary Prince of Meiningen, whose acquaintance I had made in Rome in 1869, also lodged for a while in the same house, and so did Duke William of Mecklenburg, who had been wounded at the Laon explosion and hoped to regain health at Versailles.

My colleague, Professor Bleibtreu, had a small atelier in the southern wing at the Royal palace at Versailles; it was assigned to him by M. Soulié, the curator of the Versailles galleries, who was a kind, elderly gentleman, a good patriot, without being *chauvin*. Count Solms also, whom I had known in Paris, and who afterwards was German ambassador at Madrid and at Rome, I found busy painting. As for my self, room was found for me to draw the sketches for my two pictures, "Moltke before Paris" and the "Proclamation of the German Empire," and for a few other things.

In spite of the military bustle in and about Versailles, this old royal residence had become a haven of rest after the exciting days of August and September. The suspense in which we were kept for months, by the long-delayed surrender of Paris, made time hang heavy on our hands, and this universal tedium found fit expression in Podbielski's monotonous telegrams: "Nothing new outside Paris." The princes, officers in high command, diplomatists, and other exalted persons had little to do, in consequence of which our little studio was frequently, almost daily, visited by men of high rank. Especially assiduous in his visits was a certain ruling Prince who wished to see his own heroic part in the battle of Wörth immortalised by Bleibtreu, but nothing came of it. Next came the genial, poetically gifted, old Duke Eugen Erdmann of Württemberg, a plucky, bold horseman; and the Duke of Altenburg, no whit inferior to the latter in geniality and kindness; also the ever merry Prince of Rudolstadt, the Hereditary Princes of Weimar, Mecklenburg-Strelitz, and Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern, the "*teterrima causa* of the whole business" as the Crown Prince once nicknamed him in genial banter.¹¹⁷ Of the ministers of state in camp we frequently saw Messrs. von Freydorff and Jolly of Baden, von Mittnacht and von Suckow of Württemberg, Herr von Friesen of Dresden, a dapper, genial little gentleman; and Count von Bray-Steinburg, the Foreign Secretary of Bavaria, with his grand, inscrutable and changeless countenance of the true diplomatist. Herr von Freydorff said of him: "He stumbled into the treaties of Versailles as a child stumbles into a puddle."

Towards the end of October I observed a small crowd collected round a carriage standing before the Hotel des Réservoirs, and soon afterwards a small, white-haired, spectacled old gentleman got in; as he drove by I recognized him; it was M. Thiers, who endeavoured to initiate negotiations for an armistice. A few steps further on in the Rue des Réservoirs I met Harry von Arnim, our ambassador in Rome, with whom I had kept up friendly relations during my stay in the Eternal City.

As in the days of Louis XIV so now once more Versailles had become a cosmopolitan and princely city, but, of course, in a very different sense.

As long as in October and November the weather was still propitious I frequently visited our outposts: the Bavarians at Châtenay, or our intrenchments and batteries prepared to receive the heavy siege-guns. In the advanced lines of investment it was obviously necessary to move with extreme caution and always in company of an officer, for the French fired crazily at every visible living object. It was reported

that a commandant of Mont Valérien had been deposed because he—in correct appreciation of the state of things—had not cannonaded sufficiently. Little notice was taken in Versailles of the combats in front, such as at Bougival and Le Bourget in October; it was a long way off, and the road thither was difficult and unsafe. On the 15th of November the French had pushed forward as far as Dreux, which gave rise to some anxiety at head-quarters, and some Landwehr-guards were hurried up. In the evening I met at the Café Pierson many of our special newspaper correspondents and artists, including our friend L. Pietsch, all of whom made the necessary preparations for the expected collision and shock of battle at Versailles; but nothing came of it.

Our soldiers were to be seen every day upon the Place d'Armes and in the broad avenues at parades or drills and so forth, just as if they were at home. But for the incessant artillery reports from Paris and Mont Valérien nobody would have known that anything was up. We on our side remained quiet, and our weariness and disgust were quite critical; in Versailles no less than at home people were anxious to hear of "something new from Paris"; ah yes! the bombardment of the mighty city! At the head-quarters of the Third Army no great success was anticipated from it. To bring up ammunition and guns was tedious and expensive—true, the French had to pay the costs—still, the material and moral effect of the bombardment of so mighty and populous a city appeared insignificant, and starvation seemed preferable. I cannot call to mind any impressions or conversations I had with men of influence, that justified the conclusion that the delay of the bombardment was due to any tender consideration for the capital, or to deference to public opinion abroad. Generals von Moltke and Von Blumenthal were no "sentimentalists", but cool, calm men of business who were not easily imposed upon, not even by enthusiasm or heroism, when an object had to be gained. Theatrical effects were about the last thing they cared for; least of all could they be influenced by the Parisians, with Victor Hugo at their head, raising a poetic alarm for "le coeur du monde".

The surrender of the capital, confidently expected even before the bombardment had commenced, raised the problem of speedily victualling its huge starving population. This was obviously an opportunity for large commercial transactions, and it was only natural that Frenchmen should desire to do such "a good stroke of business" themselves rather than leave it in the hands of the Germans.

Prof. Dietz, acting as interpreter at the Mairie of M. Rameau, the mayor of Versailles, kept me informed on all these matters, not omitting reference to the support naturally given by our authorities to the efforts made by German firms of the corn-exchange. It is clear then that there was no call to invoke sentimental influence from exalted quarters to advocate action, which was dictated by the simplest business considerations.

On one occasion the Crown Prince did allow himself to be influenced by considerations both of ideal and practical regard for French art. M. Regnault, the eminent physicist, director of the famous porcelain factory of Sèvres, informed the Prince that the Parisian artillery were about to destroy his establishment with its inestimable collection of models, and entreated him to prevent such an irreparable disaster. In consequence of this some sections of our men were ordered to move our guns further back, in part even all the way to Versailles. As some of our cannon were very heavy, and as the work had to be done under the fire of French guns, the King sent



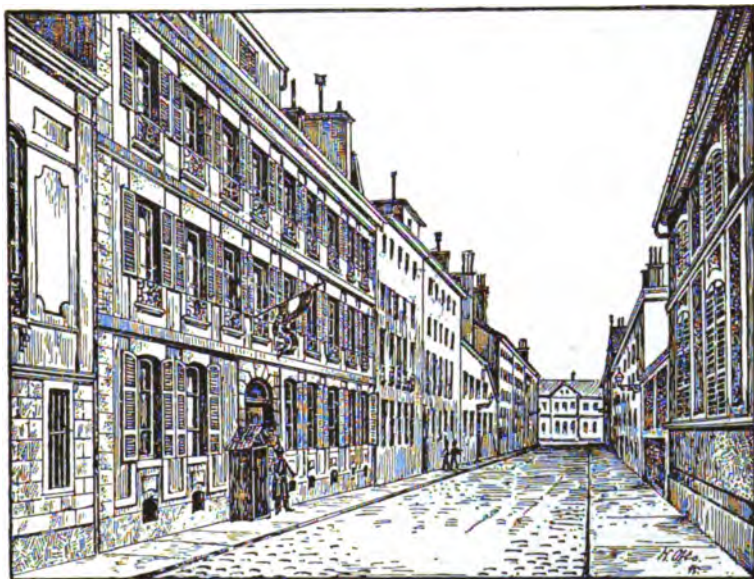
THE PROCLAMATION OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE AT VERSAILLES.
(By permission of the Photographic Society of Berlin.)

[face p. 632.]

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word to the Prince, expressive of his grave censure for having exposed the lives of his soldiers in an enterprise not dictated by military necessity.

The world had been acquainted with Moltke's scholarly countenance ever since 1866; nevertheless the appearance of the famous Chief of the General Staff, of whom it was said that he could be silent in seven languages, made on me an impression very different from that given me by all the pictures I had seen of him. His classical features, such as we observe on the busts of Caesar and of Scipio, were not stern and stony, but soft and delicate with a rosy, feminine tint; his northern blond hair, his Prussian uniform and his tall, slim, still upright figure, all blended together produced a remarkable combination of classical antiquity with modern reality. As for his taciturnity, it was, after all,



MOLTKE'S RESIDENCE IN VERSAILLES (38 Rue Neuve).

not so very pronounced. He often visited me in my small studio in the palace, and repeatedly invited me to breakfast or dinner, and at these meals the conversation was lively enough. Among other things he frequently cited passages from the works of General Trochu, and it seemed to me that he considered this French soldier to be a man of great military capacity, different from those Napoleonic Marshals MacMahon, Canrobert, Bazaine etc., whose full-dress portraits were on parade in the "à toutes les gloires de la France" palace at Versailles. When, on one occasion, I referred to these pictures in the gallery of Versailles, he remarked with a smile, "Well, well! they are now comfortably housed in Germany". Pre-eminent among his Heads of Departments was Col. von Verdy du Vernois, on account of his amiability, irrepressible wit and good temper, combined with scholarly attainments and true classic delight in the simplest enjoyments of life—his dinners were quite out of the common; even to me, who am so little

of an Epicurean. Then there was Lieutenant-Colonel Bronsart von Schellendorf, a slim, tall, cheery gentleman, besides such men of distinction as the aides-de-camp Majors de Claer and von Blume, Major Krause and finally Moltke's nephew, Herr von Burt, gifted with skill in songs. All these, together with other members of the General Staff with whom I came less in contact, formed an *ensemble* round their Chief, which for harmonious coöperation was so ideally perfect that it probably stands forth as unique in history. These men were animated by reverent devotion and unconditioned confidence in their Commander, and they exhibited in their limited circle the type and pattern of the spirit that actuated all the German armies and led them to victory.

Sincere homage was also paid by the gifted members of the General Staff of the Third Army, the army of the Crown Prince, to their Chief, Lieutenant-General von Blumenthal. He possessed all the qualities that tend to make popular a soldier of professional attainments, such as he was: perfect simplicity, modesty, frankness, good-natured wit, irrepressible humour, and charming kindliness. I hardly ever saw him other than full of fun and wit, notwithstanding his grave and responsible post. As I have already remarked above, he was no advocate of the bombardment of Paris, and when in the evening, despatches came in from the forts he was wont to crack his jokes over them. One evening the report ran: "Good effect, the forts are silent." "Yes, yes, we know all about that," he said, "it was just the same last evening, and when to-day at 12 o'clock I came into the neighbourhood of Fort Issy, bang! crack! there, they begin to be silent again." When news arrived at head-

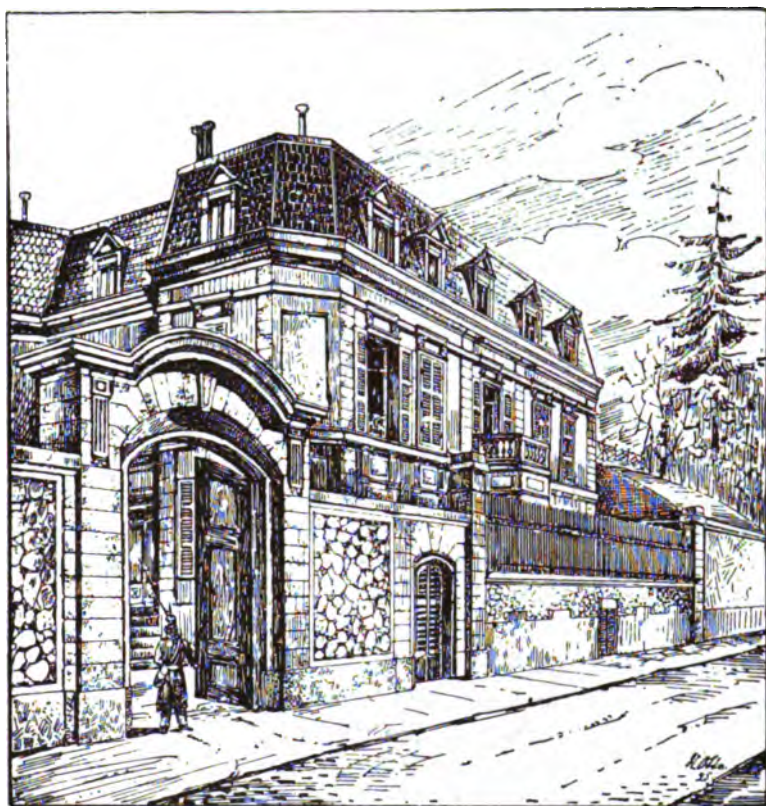


GENERAL V. BLUMENTHAL.

quarters that General von Manteuffel was advancing upon Garibaldi he exclaimed gleefully: "Well, that will be a pretty business, like the Kilkenny cats, leaving only two tails to tell the tale." The fact is that simplicity, modesty, and good humour were the characteristic features of the warlike temper of those days.

The news of the great military events of the war, such as the capitulation of Metz, the victories of von Goeben, Werder, and Manteuffel, and Prince Frederick Charles, and even the surrender of Paris, were received with such little show of exultation that for that reason alone the good people of Versailles refused to believe in them. What would not the French, and above all Gambetta, have made of them! Never did the officers in high command let us common mortals feel in their intercourse with us, why they were here, or what were their past achievements, or what they still intended to accomplish. The attentive observer could only conjecture from their

general bearing the facts which they passed over in silence. And what a number of characteristic splendid fellows and heads there were among them! There was the artillery-officer Hinderlin, comparable to a gnarled, old oak; the jovial engineers, von Kameke and Schultz; von Stosch, the commissary-general with his Jupiter's brow; rough, hardy soldiers, such as Schachtmeyer of the XIth and Kirchbach of the Vth Corps; General von Tümpling of the VIth Corps, who bore himself so majesti-



BISMARCK'S RESIDENCE IN VERSAILLES (14 Rue de Provence).

cally that he was nicknamed "His Serene Highness"; the impressionable General von Sandart, 9th Division, the "Versailles Union of Embellishment";¹ then the great Bavarian General von Hartmann, the favourite of King William—an Artist-Soldier; as early as 1807 he had been a pupil of P. von Cornelius,² as he told me, and at his quarters at Chateaufort he had had the good fortune to rescue from destruction a whole series of pictures by Bellangé, immortalising the achievements of Marshal Pelissier in the Crimea. And finally, the mightiest of them all, the Iron Chancellor himself! It was a treat for all of us when occasionally he came to dinner at the Villa André. After dinner we were wont to gather round him, a circle of listeners, and he spoke—oh! how he did speak! Indelibly impressed on my mind is the description he gave, on our first evening, of his meeting with Jules Favre, to negotiate the terms of capitulation; he depicted the unhappy, phantastic barrister from head to foot. "From the very beginning I felt sympathy for him," said the Chancellor; "he had such large hands and feet that he was more like a German than a Frenchman. And I take him to be an honest man too, since he declared to me that he was ready to eat out the broth which he had brewed for himself in Ferrières by his phrase: 'Pas un pouce de

¹ See page 640.

² Peter von Cornelius, an artist of great eminence, was born on September 23rd, 1783, in Düsseldorf, and died on the 6th of March, 1867. [*Trs.*]

terrain, pas une pierre de nos forteresses', ¹ and that if hanged he must be, he would rather be hanged by the Germans than by his own countrymen."

I had intended to go in November to our troops operating in Orleans, and to join at Dreux the corps of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, but General von Blumenthal, anxious about my safety, refused me the necessary papers. As nothing new was occurring outside Paris I took advantage of an opportunity that offered itself to return to Germany, and spend the month of December and Christmas at home. We were now able to travel via Lagny, as our pioneers had meanwhile prepared the circuitous line between Lagny and Nanteuil to avoid the ruined tunnel. My travelling companions were the personal aide-de-camp of Duke William of Mecklenburg, Cavalry Captain von Usedom, and Staff Surgeon Dr. Ziegler; we made the first trial journey over the exploded bridges of the Marne, provisionally restored, in company of Prussian officers of engineers and the traffic manager of Epernay. Merely two stiff wooden beams with rails had been placed over the exploded arches of the bridge, at an elevation of 60 to 80 ft. above the level of the Marne. The engine with tender and one van rushed over it at full speed, and we sat with opened doors in the luggage van, playing dominos. I cannot exactly say that our position was a pleasant one, and we felt justified in our mutual congratulations over a bottle of wine at Epernay station, that we were not lying, engine, truck and all, at the bottom of the Marne, and that we could look forward to more pleasant Christmas holidays at home, than our troops could anticipate outside Paris.

Meanwhile Germany, impelled by the passionate desire for a permanent and visible reward for the sacrifices made, united in the cry common to both North and South: "Emperor and Empire, and Bridges over the ² Maine!" Dr. Simson, the worthy president of the North-German Diet, together with 30 members, had gone to Versailles in the month of December on the same errand that he had been engaged on 22 years previously, viz., to offer the Imperial German Crown to the Hohenzollern throne; then it had been a fruitless errand, not so on this occasion.

The designation "German Emperor" was already current in Versailles when I was there, and was regarded as a matter of course; it was most commonly heard in the Bavarian quarters, and commonly it was known that the Bavarian Generals von der Tann and von Hartmann were ardent advocates of the idea of a German Empire and German Emperor. But the man who was unweariedly and conscientiously striving to translate wishes and hopes into fact, and who exercised the weightiest influence on the march of events, was undoubtedly the wise Grand Duke Frederick of Baden. Would the ideal aims of the Crown Prince Frederick and Bismarck's genius alone have sufficed to create the German Empire? The Grand Duke's eminent position, and the deference paid him in every quarter, were required to overcome difficulties which might very possibly have proved insurmountable.

The Christmas celebration at Versailles was reported by the "Staatsanzeiger," as follows: "Christmas Eve was celebrated at head-quarters solemnly and simply. With the wounded and in the barracks, Christmas trees, preceded by a short Divine Service; at head-quarters, social gatherings. The officers high in command and several

¹ "Not an inch of our soil, not a stone of our fortresses."

² The river Maine had been the artificial boundary between the North-German Confederation and the South-German states, created in 1866.

societies had made collections to provide Christmas gifts for the wounded, and the costs of the provision made for the troops were mostly defrayed by the officers. The whole of that day the King did not leave the prefecture, but he was surrounded by the members of the Great Head-Quarters. The Crown Prince presented the King with a large water-colour picture representing the standard-bearer of the King's Grenadier Regiment at Weissenburg." ¹

On the 15th of January, 1871, I received a telegram in Karlsruhe: "His Royal Highness the Crown Prince sends word that you would witness something worthy of your brush, if you could be here before the 18th of January. Eulenburg, Court-Marshal." I thought that an assault would be made upon Paris, and forthwith set out booted and spurred to Strassburg; I arrived happily at Lagny just in time to travel with the mailpost in the company of Hammer, the King's messenger, by the long detour via Corbeille, and reached Versailles on the 18th of January at 4 o'clock in the morning. At half-past seven I reported myself at the head-quarters of the Third Army; the Crown Prince was just coming down, and received me very kindly. He then referred me to Count Eulenburg, who asked me, to my surprise, "Have you brought your dress-coat with you?" I said "No," for on such occasions people are wont to carry a minimum of luggage. However, this mishap was easily remedied by a vendor of ready-made clothes at Versailles. I was surprised when the shop-boy said to me: "Ah, c'est pour la grand cérémonie d'aujourd'hui au château." It seemed then that the matter was known at Versailles, although all the arrangements for the celebration had been made quite in secret, as I was informed by General von Voigts-Rhetz, the Commandant of Versailles. The Parisians had presumably been informed by their spies of this coming event, and had only been mistaken in the day, as we were to find out on the day following. However, I did not yet rightly know what was going to happen in the palace, and went there by 11 o'clock. In the palace-yard and on the Place d'Armes troops were drawn up, and round the railings the Versaillese gathered in crowds. On the staircase leading to the *salle des glaces* which is so well known, cuirassiers stood in line on both sides, and the *galerie des glaces* was crowded with officers of all arms. To see this assembly just in this very hall, the grand creation of Le Brun's made a deep impression on me, and called up very strange thoughts. Why, the whole of this vast space had been dedicated to the extravagant glorification of Louis XIV as a mighty hero of war, and the pictures on the ceiling with all their allegories only harp on this one string. One of the pictures on the walls bears the inscription: "Alliance de l'Allemagne et de l'Espagne avec la Hollande, 1672," and one of the ceilings, "Passage du Rhin en présence des ennemis, 1672." Two centuries after that day Germany was here, quite alone, without allies, but relying on her own strength and force of will. And a "Passage du Rhin" had also occurred, but in a sense the reverse of that depicted on Le Brun's ceiling.

The large door at the end of the gallery was covered with red velvet hangings, and before it stood, drawn up on a raised platform, all the standard-bearers of the troops before Paris, with their distinctive badges. In front of the platform two Garde-du-Corps mounted guard with drawn falchions. At the middle of the windowed wall an altar was erected, and by it stood the Rev. Mr. Rogge, the Court-chaplain,

¹ This passage from the "Staatsanzeiger" was not quoted by the author of the article, but has been inserted by the Editor.

accompanied by six other clergymen. The King and Princes entered at 12 o'clock, took up a position facing the altar, and then the ceremony was inaugurated with Divine Service and a sermon by the Court-chaplain. The Service concluded with the singing of a chorale and the benediction, and then the King ascended the platform, where the victorious, tattered German standards formed a most effective background for the illustrious assembly. King William, holding his helmet in his left hand, read an address, declaring that he accepted at the hand of the People and Princes of Germany the Imperial Crown offered to him. Thereupon Count Bismarck, the Chancellor of the Confederation, clad in the blue uniform of the 7th Cuirassiers and bearing his steel helmet in his hands, stepped forward and read out the Deed proclaiming the creation of the New German Empire. His voice, quivering with emotion, sounded dry and harsh, and the whole ceremony, notwithstanding its weight and importance, seemed to have made no visible impression on the assembly. But when the Grand Duke of Baden, who stood at the King's left—at his right were the Grand Duke of Weimar and the Crown Prince—stepped forward and, with clear, melodious voice, raised the shout: "His Majesty Emperor William the Victorious! Long may he live!" then the pent-up tension of the assembly gave way, and the plate-glass of the hall rattled with enthusiastic thunder, such as had never before reverberated from these walls. After the three hurrahs had died away, they were echoed by the mighty cheers of the troops drawn up below. Unfortunately this glorious and impressive closing-scene of the Franco-German War terminated with the officers defiling past in a manner more fit for a ceremony of some order of chivalry enacted at the Royal castle of Berlin, than of the celebration of such a far-reaching political event. Now the German Emperor descended from the platform, and greeted the higher officers, presented one by one, *whilst Bismarck stood aside*; ¹ he was, however, warmly congratulated by the Bavarian General von Hartmann, and by General von Blumenthal. Not till ten years after this event did I learn from a most reliable source, that the title of "Emperor of Germany," which King William would have preferred, would have led to complications in the public law of Germany, and that the Grand Duke of Baden had compromised the matter by calling for three cheers for the neutral title of "Emperor William the Victorious."

In the evening the Emperor, the Princes, and the Generals in high command were assembled at tea at the Crown Prince's quarters, which were the scene of a memorable little episode. The Crown Prince shewed to Prince Charles of Prussia, who was reputed for his skill in heraldry and escutcheons, a small shield he had designed, exhibiting the German Black Eagle on golden field, with red armour and red halo round the head. A small group gathering round it, the Emperor joined them, asking: "What is there to be seen here?" When Prince Charles shewed him the escutcheon and wanted to explain, he turned sharply away, saying, "Oh indeed!"

Next day brought the consequence of the historic event of the 18th of January. Early in the morning already unusual military activity was observed in the streets of Versailles, and the people shewed symptoms of excitement. Patrols of dragoons swept through the streets, and dispersed the people, or drove them into the houses;

¹ In fact, William was for a short time offended with Bismarck, because he desired to be called Emperor of Germany, not German Emperor. It is a distinction with very considerable difference. [*Trs.*]

Bavarian troops and landwehr had come up as reserves, the guns on the Place d'Armes stood horsed ready to start, and the cannonade from Mont Valérien was unusually lively. I had been invited to meet the Grand Duke of Weimar at 12 o'clock. He gave expression to his keen interest for arts and poetry even here in camp and in the midst of great events. I drew his attention to the fact that a battle must be going forward, but he replied: "That can't be, I know nothing of it." Nevertheless our conversation about art and Scheffel's poetry was disturbed by patrols of dragoons riding past and by my own feeling of unrest. He dismissed me kindly, and I hastened as quickly as possible along the road to Rocquencourt and in the direction of Vaucresson, whence I heard the sound of artillery fire and of small arms coming across. But the weather was gloomy, and dark with intermittent snow-storms, so that little was to be seen; I only noticed a few sentries on the road, and on a field, some little way off, a battery, which appeared to direct its fire into and beyond the wood in front of it. At head-quarters no great importance was attached in the evening to the engagement of the day, but on the morrow, when the French requested an armistice of 48 hours to bury their dead, it became known that Trochu had sallied out with considerable forces from Mont Valérien. The Crown Prince informed me that the French artist Henri Regnault, son of the director of the porcelain works at Sèvres, was among the fallen. In the year preceding, on the 1st of May, 1869, young, brilliant Henri Regnault had been my guest in Rome at the Cervara feast of the Germans, where I was in the chair, and he rode with me in the richly adorned festive chariot, drawn by two white bulls with gilded horns, from the Porta Maggiore out into the Roman Campagna. During the siege of Paris he enlisted in the Gardes Mobiles, and fell here quite unnecessarily and heedlessly by the bullet of a Prussian rifleman, who certainly understood the trade of war better than this young and distinguished artist did. An instructive example of the manner in which French troops were commanded on that occasion, was furnished by the statement of a corporal of the line, whom we had made prisoner. He told us that when he and his men did not know during the fight what to do or whither to turn, their officer cried out to them: "Avancez un peu, si vous voulez!"

After this last attempt of the 19th of January at bursting through the German lines, speedily followed by the reports of General von Goeben's victory of St. Quentin, and of the three days' battle of General von Werder at Montbéliard, it became evident that matters were gradually drawing to a close. Bombarding, certainly, was still proceeding with great vigour; the French had already set on fire the town and the castle of St. Cloud as well as the castle of Meudon, and we on our part had done great damage to the forts, especially Fort Issy, when the report was spread that Jules Favre, the messenger of peace, had made his appearance. On the 26th of January every thing was surprisingly quiet,—the guns were silent. On the 27th of January the Crown Prince gave a grand dinner-party in honour of the 12th birthday of Prince William.¹ The guests comprised the Emperor, Prince Charles of Prussia, the Grand Dukes of Baden and of Weimar, the Duke of Coburg, General von Moltke and other gentlemen of exalted rank. Dinner was served, not only in the dining-room, but also in the salon adorned with biblical texts; an especially fine Johannisberg wine in green

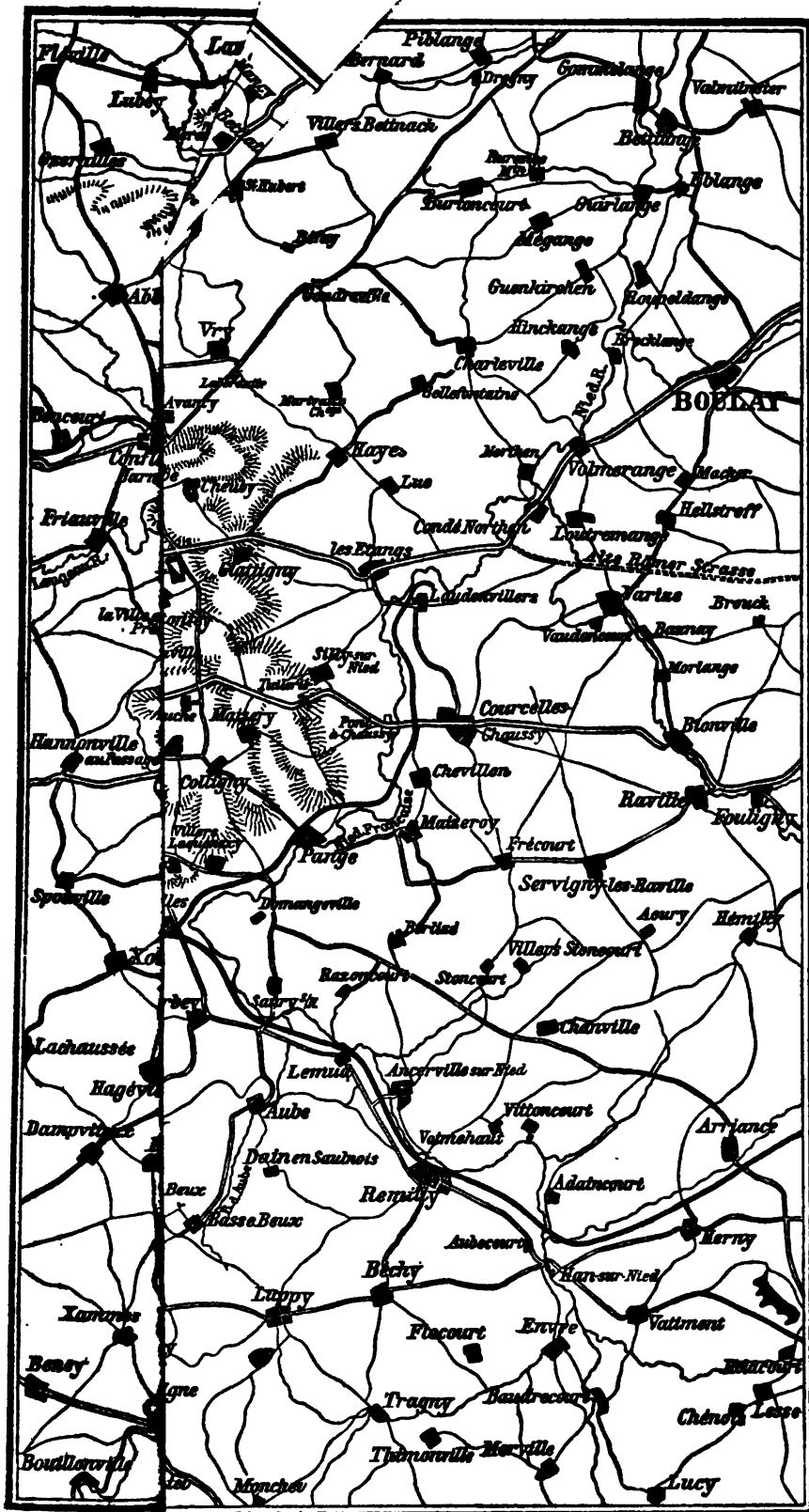
¹ The present Emperor William II.

miniature rummers was handed round. On all faces lay one expression of silent content and gladness, but not a sound was uttered, no toast was proposed, only Moltke was silently congratulated, and he—was silent! That was the celebration of the termination of the war.

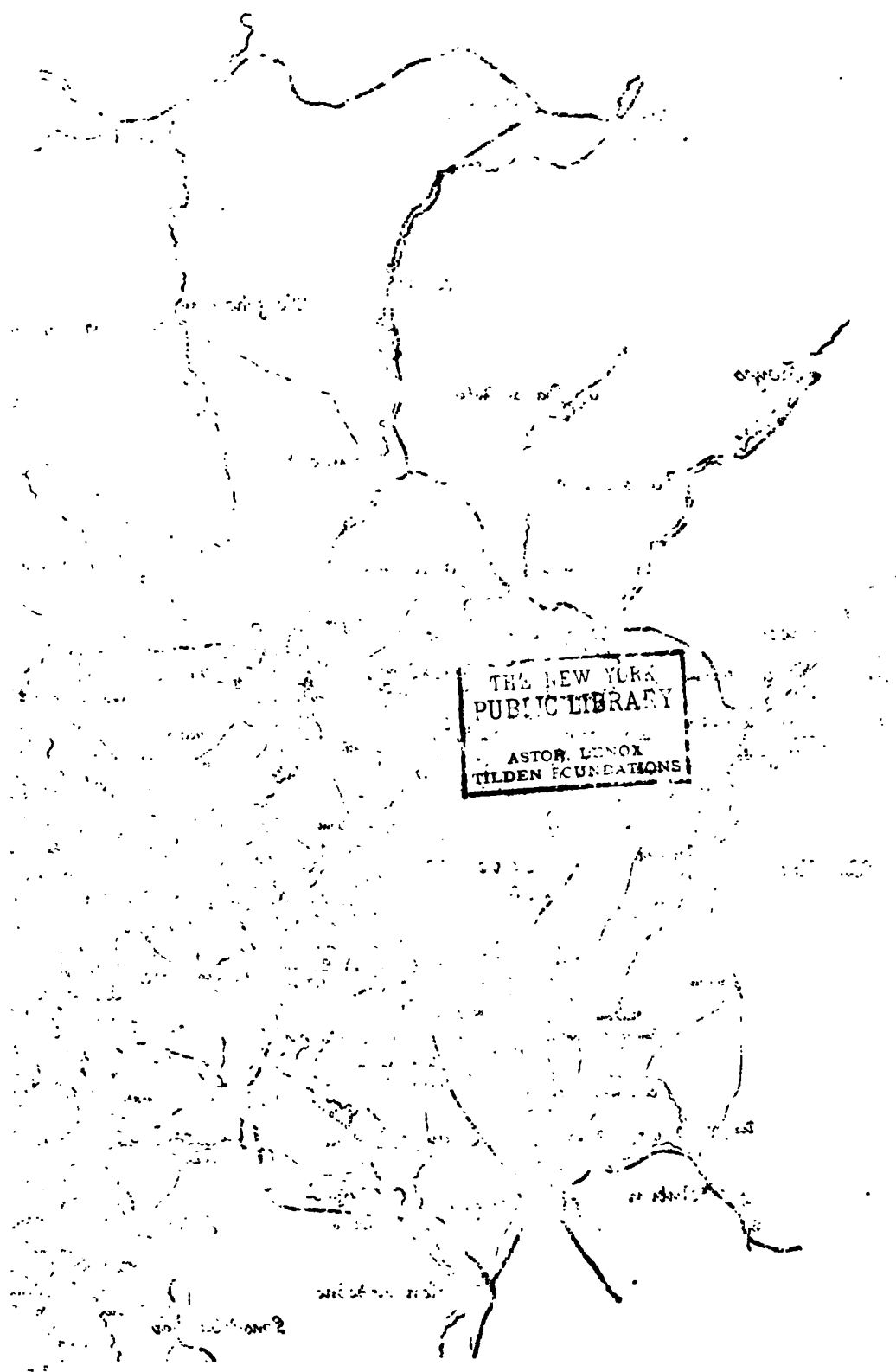
Next day, on the 28th of January, the conclusion of the capitulation of Paris, and of the three weeks' armistice was officially announced in the evening at the Crown Prince's dinner-table; Presidents Von Forckenberg and Von Köller, and Prince Wied happened to be present at that dinner in the Villa André, and after dinner I went with these gentlemen to a modest celebration of this festival over a glass of German beer. On the 29th of January, on a Sunday, our troops occupied Mont Valérien and the other forts. And now there set in a time of ease and comfort, which enabled us to make excursions in safety among our lines of outposts and to inspect the wonderful contrivances for attack and defence which had been made by the Germans, as well as the destruction of houses, villages, and batteries of our lines of investment wrought by the French guns on the one hand, and by our shells on the forts on the other hand. Exceedingly amusing were the German lines of defence within the range of the 9th Division (General von Sandrart), in the direction of St. Cloud and Bougival; in consequence of this the Division was dubbed with the honourable title of "the Union of Embellishment." St. Cloud presented a sad appearance; the ruins were still partly smoking, and Frenchmen in blue blouses carried off in carts drawn by single horses, all sorts of furniture and household utensils from the smoking ruins, assuring us that it was their own property, a matter which we certainly were unable to verify, and in fact nobody cared to take the trouble. Fort Issy was pretty well knocked about, and, above all, the barracks, but an effective breach



RESIDENCE OF THE GRAND DUKE OF BADEN AT VERSAILLES (Rue Sathory).
(After a contemporary sketch by A. v. Werner.)



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such as was made at Lunette 52 at Strassburg was still a long way off, and the bomb-proof case-mates would still have afforded some protection. The fortifications were, in the opinion of our engineers, elegant, very practical and solid. The French guns had, however, done our troops so little harm that Dr. Boeger, the Surgeon-General, reported one evening at head-quarters, that the health-statistics of the troops were, in spite of the wounds, more favourable than in times of peace—this was no doubt due, to a great extent, to the red wine of France, which was abundantly supplied to the men. The French asserted then of the German troops: "Ils sont d'une santé insultante."

Meanwhile I had taken in hand my sketches for the Proclamation of the Empire, and was busy making portraits up to the moment of departure from Versailles. The *galerie des glaces*, the scene of the solemn act, had immediately afterwards been converted into a hospital, and occupied by wounded from the engagement of the 19th of January, and in the midst of these sad surroundings I had to paint my water-colour studies of the hall. The sittings for the portraits were occasionally subject to startling interruptions. On the 7th of February, for example, the Crown Prince sent to me at 11 o'clock in the morning, when General von Blumenthal came in to report that Gambetta would not acknowledge the Paris Convention, and that at that very hour arrangements were being made to send a few corps south. At 2 o'clock, as General von Blumenthal gave me a sitting, the inspector of telegraphs brought a despatch that Gambetta had resigned his post as member of the government, and that the orders of two hours ago could now be countermanded. The last portrait study, which I did on the 5th of March, 1871, was that of Prince Otto of Bavaria, who was Colonel of a regiment of Chevaux Legers, staying at Verrières. When I called upon him, he was playing croquet with his aide-de-camp. One of the evening amusements at the headquarters of the Crown Prince was the inspection of my portrait-studies and other sketches I had made during the day. I had also secured a cello at Versailles and had ordered my printed music from Karlsruhe, and could join in the musical performances of the evening at headquarters. Count Solms, an excellent musician, Captain Lencke, Major Karnatz, and Lieutenant Bronsart von Schellendorff took their turn at the piano, and the Bavarian Cavalry Captain, Baron von Stauffenberg, sang. The Crown Prince's favourite piece was Gounod's well-known "Méditations" to Bach's prelude, which he was never tired of hearing and asking for. When sixteen years afterwards, in October 1887, I passed for the last time several weeks with the Crown Prince in Baveno, I had also sent for my cello and played sometimes after dinner. "Just as at Versailles," remarked the Crown Prince—a sad reminiscence!

An amusing event took place during the armistice, on the bridge of Neuilly, which had not been destroyed, and which those wishing to enter or leave Paris had to pass. Along the whole of its breadth the bridge was barred by a line of our Landwehr guards, bearded giants; on the other side troops of small Parisian *moblots* came crowding up, and they refused to believe that these men were our Landwehr.¹ The Landwehrmen discharged their tedious duties with creditable calm and patience, which formed a pleasing contrast with the noisy, gesticulating Frenchmen and Frenchwomen, and caused many an amusing scene. I made the interesting acquaintance of Victorien

¹ In the early days of the war the French caricatures represented the German Landwehr as pot-bellied, spectacled greybeards, who had to stop from time to time to fetch breath and wipe their spectacles. [*Trs.*]

Sardou, by procuring him a passport to enable him to pass our lines on his way to Orleans, he having been introduced to me by special letters of recommendation from Paris. Some years afterwards I learnt in Paris that my presence at Versailles was known to them; their spies must have served them well.

In the month of February, during the armistice, Versailles presented a perfect picture of a German garrison town: soldiers at drill, men falling in on parade, at other times sauntering about, off duty, in the broad avenues. Only once the presence of the war and the sufferings of our men on the Loire were brought home to us; that was when, on a certain Sunday in the middle of February, the 22nd Division held its entry into Versailles. Very few of the men were dressed according to regulations; there was no lack among the men of civilian clothes or other substitutes for their uniform; sabots even had come into use; nevertheless the noble fellows bore themselves bravely as they marched past in parade before the Crown Prince and his Staff, who had taken up their post before the prefecture.

During the time that the terms of peace were being discussed at the National Assembly at Bordeaux, they formed also the chief subject of conversation at Versailles. "Shall we enter Paris or not?"—the news was contradictory from day to day, and at head-quarters there was, of course, nothing to be learnt. At last the report was spread: "Yes, we shall enter Paris—but only for appearance' sake."

On the 1st of March 30,000 men of the XIth and VIth Prussian, and IInd Bavarian Corps passed in parade over the newly restored pontoon-bridge at Sèvres to Longchamp, and thence through the once charming Bois de Boulogne, now ruthlessly and wantonly destroyed by the Parisians, into Paris itself, round the Arc de Triomphe and through the Champs Elysées to the Place de la Concorde, General von Kameke being appointed temporary governor of this part of Paris. After the parade the Emperor and the Crown Prince returned to Versailles, but the Princes Charles, Albrecht and Adalbert of Prussia had joined the troops holding their entry. I had been present at the parade, and it goes without saying that every thing was as neat and precise as in times of peace. On the day following I went into Paris with some officers who were friends of mine. The houses in the Avenue de Neuilly, with their window-blinds down, looked desolate and forlorn, and there were very few people about. The avenues leading to the Arc de l'Etoile were made impassable by neatly dug pits, and the large reliefs on the lower part of the Arc de Triomphe were protected by rafters and sandbags. German cannon, planted round the structure commemorating the triumphs of Napoleon I, looked threateningly down the roads leading to it. Bavarian troops were quartered in the Palais de l'Industrie, a part of them bivouacked near the Place de la Concorde, the military bands played, and our men sang and danced on the *place*. The French had veiled in black crape the faces of the eight statues representing the cities of France, and that of Strassburg was wholly covered with French flags and wreaths of *immortelles*. The exits from the Place de la Concorde to the Rue de Rivoli and Rue Royale, to the Tuileries Gardens and the bridge were blocked with limbers and ammunition waggons and guarded by French infantry. Within the quarter of the city occupied by our troops, a Parisian mob, burghers and rabble, bustled about, not perceptibly in hostile mood, but treating the whole business more as a lark, and uttering jeers and jibes against our troops, which fortunately were either ignored or not understood by them.

At 4 o'clock in the afternoon the Crown Prince and the Grand Duke of Baden appeared in the Champs Elysées in an open carriage, but seemed to wish not to be observed.—On the 3rd of March there was a parade of the Guards on the Longchamp, and on the same day the ratifications of the peace arrived from Bordeaux, and we were by treaty bound to withdraw our troops from Paris. The Head-quarters too made their arrangements for immediate departure, and left Versailles in a few days, meeting on the 7th of March for the last time, at the review of the Württembergers, Saxons and the 1st Bavarian Corps at Champigny and Villiers.

On the 6th of March I travelled in the retinue of the Grand Duke of Baden to Lagny. The roads were littered right and left with thousands of French rifles, Gardes Mobiles came by in great troops like companies and battalions, drunk, singing, bawling, blocking the whole breadth of the road. The escort of dragoons for the Grand Duke having ridden some leagues ahead, under the command of Captain von Göhler, our carriages several times got into critical and awkward positions.

At last we were on our long and eagerly desired homeward journey! The royal residence of Versailles resumed its wonted appearance, but only for a while—within a few months it was the scene of bloody tragedies enacted by the government against the Communards of Paris.



SILVER MEDAL FOR THE GENERALS. (Obverse.)
(Royal Cabinet, Berlin.)

CHAPTER II

THE RETURN FROM THE WAR

By DR. JULIUS VON PFLUGK-HARTTUNG,
Royal Keeper of the Archives and University Professor Emeritus.

Ring forth the chimes from belfry to belfry!
Ring out the old sorrows, ring in the new joys;
Let far and wide the beacons blaze and gleam,
For the Lord has manifested himself in us;
Gloria in Excelsis!

GEIBEL.

WHEN peace was assured, the Emperor William left Versailles (on the 7th of March) and travelled by easy stages to the frontier. On the battle-field of Villiers he held a review of Saxon, Bavarian, and Württemberg troops. On the 15th of March he bid farewell to his victory-crowned army, at Nancy, in an Order of the Day, saying: "I bid you farewell and thank you once more, with my heart full of warm and deep emotions, for all the achievements due to your valour and endurance. You return to your homes with the proud consciousness that you have fought victoriously one of the greatest wars recorded in all history."

The return home of the troops had already begun, already preparations were being made worthily to celebrate the birthday of their highest War-Lord, when again a storm arose, that threatened to imperil all. Insurrection raised its head at Paris, and on the 18th of March the French government was forced to give way and to move its still reliable troops to Versailles. The government of the Commune took its place, and was only conquered after a ferocious civil war, and it fell amidst the blood-red flames of the Tuileries and of the Hôtel de Ville. The Germans on their part afforded the French government all help they could, without, however, compromising themselves.

All the German troops still remaining outside Paris were formed into the Third Army, and were placed under the command of the Crown Prince of Saxony, so that within two days 200,000 German warriors could have been assembled to confront that fury-driven human volcano, which, however, wisely forbore to provoke this organized force. Lieutenant-General von Fabrice, the hitherto Governor-General of Versailles, took the place of Prince Bismarck in the settlement of any legal, administrative, or diplomatic questions arising; but for all that the events at Paris retarded the return of our troops, and the definite conclusion of peace. When the French government at last had gained the upper hand (May 28th), and the German claims had been admitted, the troops bent



BURNING OF THE TUILERIES.

their steps homeward. The armies were broken up, and the troops instructed to move in columns, following one another at the distance of a day's march, the whole having a depth of three

to four days' march. There were thus formed four great waves, which were so regulated in their succession that the march to the frontier, or even to the Rhine, was executed without any crossings, and thence the troops could be forwarded by train. The

Guards and the IVth Corps were even able to make use of the French lines, the VIIIth Corps, the greater part of the IXth Corps and the Württemberg Division made the whole journey home on foot. By the middle of July all the troops were in their several garrisons.

Only troops of occupation remained behind in those parts of French territory which were retained as a material guarantee for the payment of the war-indemnity. At first it was a force of 120,000 men, but it was gradually reduced to 50,000 men; viz., the 4th, 6th, and 19th Prussian Divisions, and the 2nd Bavarian Division, all under the command of General von Manteuffel. In the months of August and September 1873 these men also quitted French soil, and Verdun was the last fortress in German hands.



GENERAL V. FABRICE.

Thus the men streamed eastward, these sunburnt and frost-shaken warriors, with ardent minds and longing hearts. Hardships they still had to endure, for the way was long, and the sun was hot, and body and limbs were worn out. At the very threshold of their homes some men broke down; spared by their enemy's bullets, they fell victims to sun-stroke. At last Alsace was reached; the black, white, and red standard floating from the Mairie, was greeted with loud jubilation—but the inhabitants stood aside in sullen silence. When the former German frontier was reached all this was changed at a blow.

Town and villages had put on their festive garments, worthily to receive their liberators from French troubles. One writer reports from Saarlouis: "A very forest of flags hid our houses; triumphal arches followed each other in profusion, all being adorned with inscriptions, pictures of German heroes etc. The most charming of all ornaments were the young maidens clad in white, who handed to the men out of huge baskets large bouquets of artificial or natural flowers, so that soon every breast, eye, and every muzzle of the rifles, were gay with colour. It was a curious sight to behold the flashing weapons of death decked out with flowers. The joyous shouts of the thronging multitude, and the clang of the church-bells followed us far beyond the town.

"Our sore trials, happily overcome, received now a plenteous reward. Every march was a triumphal procession; the enthusiasm with which we were received, beggars all description. It was a great, a marvellous time, the remembrance of which will re-awake in us youthful fire even when we are grey-headed old men."

And thus they marched on till the Rhine was reached, reading joy in the thousands of faces they met. Outside the towns the schoolmasters met the home-coming men with the songs of children, and the cannons thundered; the nights were ablaze with illuminations and bon-fires, and old and young, men and women outdid each other in offering their hearty welcome. On the great highways, and after long and repeated marches of troops through the same locality these expressions of joy were naturally somewhat toned down. From Mayence, where there was a camp of French prisoners, a soldier wrote: "We, with our haggard, sunburnt faces, in shabby patched garments were contemptuously pushed aside by the fashionable world; indeed some young ladies haughtily turned up their noses at us, then sailed smilingly up to some Zouaves to trot out their French jargon. They certainly were charming German maidens!"

The railway journeys of the troops were a succession of never ending jubilation; ¹ the railway stations were adorned with flags and wreaths and thronged by the multitudes greeting the arrivals with hurrahs, and waving hats and kerchiefs. As the men left the railway carriages they were met by the local "Association for the Refreshment of Returning Soldiers." "Beer, bread, butter, flowers—everything we were required to accept. I stood there helpless, with a piece of bread and butter in each hand, and in front of me stood a charming lassie, busily engaged in adorning my breast and

¹ It ought to be pointed out that this popular joy of the Germans was not the expression of triumph over their fallen enemy, but of gratitude for their deliverance from French interference in their own affairs. In fact the war of 1870/71 was but the second and concluding act of the "Wars of Liberation" of 1814/15. [*Trs.*]

helmet with oak-leaves. I believe my shabby coat even gleamed and smiled with delight and pride."

Of course, the crowning reception was in the garrison-town.¹ There the expectant multitude stood outside the town in dense masses, impatiently longing for the train and greeting its arrival with loud hurrahs. The soldiers leapt out and piled arms; fathers clasped their sons, wives their husbands, the lover his betrothed—what a time since their last parting! how much, how much has not happened since then! Many a one who had set out as a heedless youth, now returned, chastened by sorrow and suffering, as a grave man in ripe years, with long beard and deeply furrowed countenance; many a slim lassie had meanwhile developed into a full-blown maiden, and many, many a mother who had parted with her son broken-hearted, now shed tears of joy, but sorrow and care had bleached her hair, and ploughed indelible furrows on her brow.

The reception at the station was followed by a triumphal march through the town. All the church-bells rang, many streets were perfect oceans of flags, the houses were crowded with spectators up to the roofs, rejoicing, greeting, and throwing flowers. And below, the pavement resounded with the heavy tread of the conquerors of proud France; their eyes gleamed with joy, and their sunken cheeks were coloured with the blush of emotion. Speedily all the helmets were adorned with garlands, and even knapsacks and cooking-pots were gay with flowers and leaves. On the market-place stood the expectant city-fathers, the clergyman offered a prayer of thanks, and from thousands of throats burst forth the loud hymn: "Now thank we all our God," The burghermaster delivers a short, weighty address to the men, which is followed by loud cheers for the German Emperor, the music sounds "Heil dir im Siegerkranz,"² and loud utterances of joy are accompanied with flourished helmets and hats.

Now the men fall in once more, and march outside the city gate. The colonel and the major with heartfelt words take leave of their men, and many an involuntary tear rolls down and moistens the shaggy beard. The quarter-billets are distributed and the standard is escorted by the "Honour-Company." "Present Arms!" is commanded for the last time, the drums beat, and the eagle, beneath whose wings victory upon victory had been gained and many a brave man had breathed his last, they beheld for the last time. Next day the arms are restored to the magazines, the men fall in for the last time, the captain, in deep emotion, bids farewell to his company, "his lads," and the men disperse. Those living at a distance betake themselves to the station, accompanied by their comrades. One more embrace, one more, the last pressure of the hand, and the train is off. Only a few hours, and the men, who had faithfully held together in untold hardship and peril of death, were sundered by long distances, but at home loving hands were stretched out to meet them.

Everyday life resumes its sway—as though there never had been any war, but chequered reminiscences, history, and possibly also pains in the breast or in some limb, keep alive the memory of the terrible war.

But in the midst of these soul-purifying joys, jarring notes of discord resounded, overpowered, however, by the roaring storm. Bebel³ exclaimed in the Reichstag:⁴

¹ In Germany a regiment always remains quartered in the same place. [*Trs.*]

² The Prussian National Hymn. [*Trs.*]

³ A socialist. [*Trs.*]

⁴ The German parliament. [*Trs.*]

"he protested against the annexation of Alsace—Lorraine, as a crime against the law of nations, as a stain of disgrace on German history." Liebknecht's ¹ "Volksstaat" stigmatized the victorious German Commanders as "cut-throats" and "mercenaries", and the victorious soldiers as "two-legged beasts in uniform." And when the Saxon troops returned home, the "Free Press" of Chemnitz said: "Citizens, hang out black flags, a band of robbers and incendiaries is entering your gates."

The entry held by the troops in Berlin on the 16th of June was magnificent. It took place on the day after the prorogation of the Reichstag, which had sanctioned the treaty of peace with France, and acknowledged the New Constitution of Germany. Everything combined to make the ceremony a success: the youthful German Imperial City, the loveliest "King's Weather," and 42,000 troops of all arms, led by the supreme commander. The troops consisted principally of the whole Corps of the Guards and one representative battalion from every portion of the whole army, and 83 standards and eagles captured from the enemy. The city had clad herself in her most brilliant and festive garments, made radiant with good taste, and beautified with artistic ornaments and poetic mottoes. Many scores of thousands had streamed in from far and near, to gaze, to rejoice, and to add to the surging multitudes in the streets, at the windows, and even on the roofs, walls, and trees. Along the "Siegesstrasse" ² the trades and unions formed line on both sides, carrying their banners and badges.

On the "Tempelhof Feld" ³ the Emperor with a brilliant entourage reviewed the troops of entry. Then the march began, led by the oldest Prussian General, the venerable Field Marshal Count Wrangel, surrounded by Staff Officers, by Officers of the Great General Staff and foremost among these, Blumenthal, Podbielsky, Stosch, and Stiehle. These were followed by the Adjutants, Surgeons, Generals, Generals aides-de-camp to the Emperor, Generals in command, and Commanders-in-Chief: The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, the Crown Prince of Saxony, Von Steinmetz and Von Manteuffel; and then as a separate group, the trio: PRINCE BISMARCK, COUNT MOLTKE AND COUNT ROON. Behind these three the Emperor rode alone, but followed by the Crown Prince, Prince Frederick Charles, carrying his Marshal's baton, Royal and other Princes, ⁴ among whom the Grand Duke of Baden and Prince Luitpold of Bavaria were pre-eminent. The regimental bands struck up loud and exulting strains, forming the van-guard of the captured standards, accompanied by picked troops of the victorious Army, most of them adorned with the Iron Cross. ⁵ The troops followed in dense array: first the Infantry, then the Cavalry, and lastly the Artillery with the Army Service Corps. The bells of all the churches rang their loudest; shouts of joy were heard along the whole line of march, and these rose to a perfect storm at the approach of the Emperor, of Bismarck, Moltke, Roon, the Standards, and the combined regiments.

The procession travelled along the Belle Alliance ⁶ Strasse to the Halle Gate,

¹ Also a socialist. [*Trs.*]

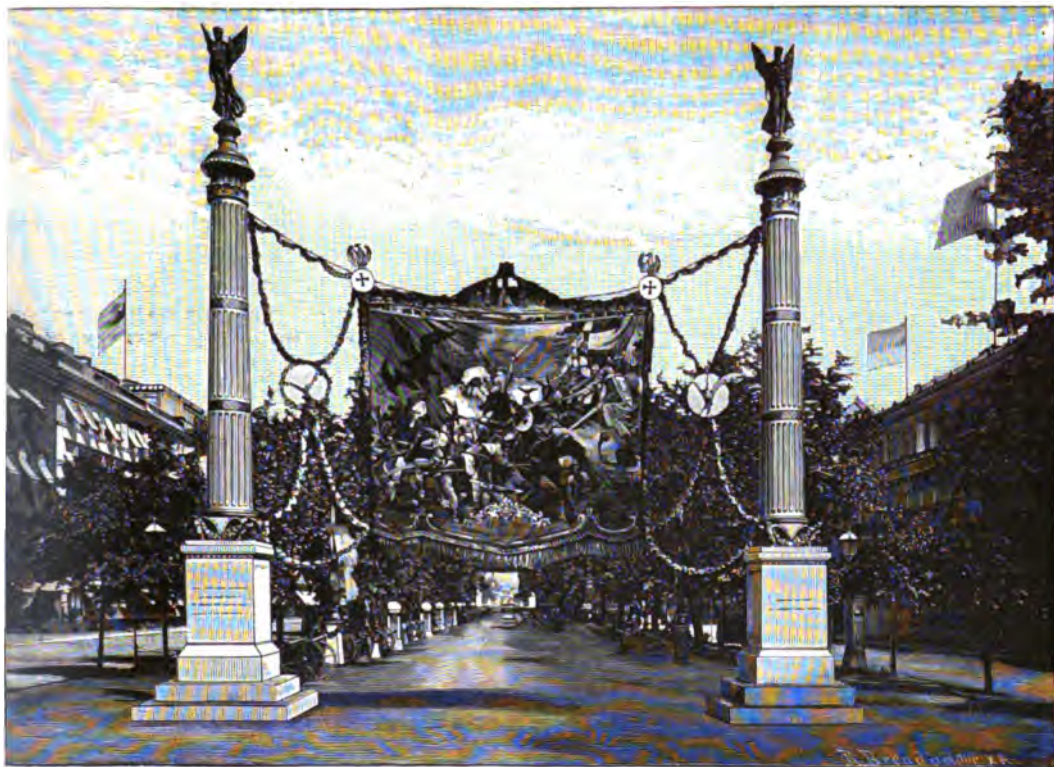
² Street of Victory. [*Trs.*]

³ An open plain outside Berlin. [*Trs.*]

⁴ See note on page 621.

⁵ This distinction is only conferred for conspicuous valour in the field. [*Trs.*]

⁶ Named after the hotel "La Belle Alliance" on the battle-field of Waterloo, where Wellington and Blücher met. [*Trs.*]



UNTER DEN LINDEN, WITH A DECORATION, "WAR AND VICTORY," BY A. V. WERNER.
(After a contemporary photograph.)

where a mighty statue, representing Berlin, greeted it, holding out a golden wreath of laurel. Then the march was continued through the Königgrätzer ¹ Strasse to the Brandenburg Gate. The whole road was marked with the memorials of the battles of the war, from that of Weissenburg to the last engagements before Paris. On the Askaniischer Platz, adorned with trophies, a mighty gallery had been erected, and was occupied by 10,000 school-children, who sang "Die Wacht am Rhein". On the Potsdamer Platz stood a "Victoria" flanked by two massive female figures, representing Strassburg and Metz, ² and fronting a row of gigantic cannon. From that point as far as the exit of the street "Unter den Linden", there stood a long and unbroken line of guns captured from the enemy. The Brandenburg Gate was richly adorned, and the Pariser Platz was brilliant with the gallery filled with young ladies of distinction. At half-past 12 the Emperor rode through, amidst overpowering shouts. Suddenly all was hushed; the spokeswoman of the young ladies stepped forward, and reciting to the Emperor a poem written for the occasion, handed to him a laurel-wreath. He

¹ Named after the victory at Königgrätz over Austria in 1866. [*Trs.*]

² Two fortresses, once bulwarks, then for centuries threats, and now once more, defences of Germany. [*Trs.*]

accepted it with the words: "The thanks to which you have given expression in the poem, I accept, but for the Army, not for myself." Then he rode up to a platform occupied by wounded officers, and handed the laurel-wreaths to them, saying: "Gentlemen, I thank you, this festival you have prepared for me." Under a canopy at the exit of the Pariser Platz, the city of Berlin, by its burghermaster, offered its greeting; and his hurrah was taken up and passed on from rank to rank. The street "Unter den Linden" ¹ had, along its whole length, been converted into fairy-land: French cannon and mitrailleuses were drawn up all along, wounded men were accommodated on seats, gilt candelabra exhibited the official despatches from the war, five triumphal arches were erected, symbolic representations of the war were seen at every hand, and the palaces were richly adorned. At the end, in front of the Royal Palace, stood a colossal statue, representing a victorious Germania, flanked by Alsace and Lorraine, and the pedestal embellished with poetic reliefs by Siemering. As the Emperor rode past the opera-house he saluted the officers of the garrison, and several deputations; then he turned aside with his staff and let the troops file past.

The festival was appropriately concluded by unveiling the monument of King Frederick William III, father of the Emperor William I, the conqueror in the War of Liberation of 1813 and 1814. The French standards were deposited at the foot of the monument; just as the veil fell the soldiers presented arms, the standards were lowered, the drums beat and the bands played the Prussian National Hymn; all the bells rang out, and 101 cannon-shots were fired. Then was sung the chorale; "Now thank we all our God," in which all present joined with deep emotion. Worthily and truthfully this war of United Germany was linked to the "War of Liberation." In the evening the city was grandly illuminated, and the Dönhofsplatz was the scene of music and dance, with abundant libations of beer. ²

The 16th of June witnessed the first festival of victory and home-coming at Berlin, and the 16th of July the last at Munich. There the Ludwigsstrasse was adorned with 170 Venetian masts, each supporting an appropriate medallion, surmounted with pennants of German and Bavarian colours. For the King of Bavaria this was a day of special joy and justification, for he had boldly placed his army in line with that of Prussia, and now could receive it crowned with victory. In the midst of all this joy were seen the German Crown Prince, and the chivalrous General von der Tann. In the evening the city was illuminated, at the Court the King gave a banquet, and at the theatre there was a festive representation. A passage in the piece alluded to the concord between Wittelsbach ³ and Hohenzollern, ⁴ and then the King seized the hand of the Crown Prince and both stepped forward to the front of the Royal box. This demonstration was greeted with stormy enthusiasm by the densely filled house.

It was the solemn avowal of the fraternisation of North and South. This gave to the festive entries of the troops weight and depth, far surpassing the mere exultation in victory. Not only was the enemy overthrown, but great results of far-reaching

¹ The "Regent Street" of Berlin. [*Trs.*]

² Who can conceive of German merriment without beer? [*Trs.*]

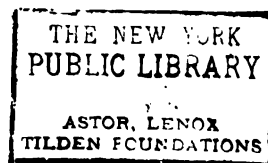
³ The Royal House of Bavaria. [*Trs.*]

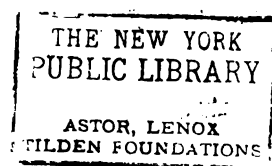
⁴ The now Imperial House of Prussia. [*Trs.*]



THE POTSDAMER PLATZ ON THE DAY OF THE ENTRY INTO BERLIN.

[back p. 650.







importance had been secured for the future. This purified the joy of the victorious, and soothed the sorrow of those who saw their loved ones no more—far away in the soil of France they had found their rest.

[illegible]

This Eagle cut out in velvet, and fitted on cloth of gold, and also the Imperial Crown, similarly prepared, were hastily got ready at the Head-Quarters of Versailles, and fixed on the drapery behind the steps on which His Majesty the King of Prussia stood on the solemn occasion when, on the 18th of January, 1871, he was proclaimed German Emperor in the *salle des glaces* of the château in Versailles.

FRIEDRICH WILHELM, CROWN PRINCE.



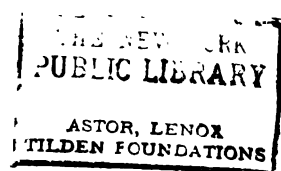
GOLD MEDAL FOR THE GENERALS. (Reverse.)
(Royal Cabinet, Berlin.)



Hohenzollern Museum.

THE FOUR GENERATIONS.

H. Pohlmann.
[face p. 652.]



GENERAL INDEX

TO

SUBJECTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

References to Illustrations are printed in Italics.

A

- Aalbeck Bay: 577, 578.
Aar, river: 469.
Abadié d'Aydrein, Gen. de l': 48.
Abbaye-aux-Bois: 263, 265.
Abbeville: 349.
Abeken, Councillor: 34(n), 292,
595, 628. *Portrait* 594.
Abendroth, Col. von: 298.
Achères: 413.
Acheux: 350, 375.
Achiet-le-Grand: 348, 349, 350,
351, 354.
Adalbert of Prussia, Prince: 57,
282 (and n), 569, 571, 575, 627;
quoted: 283. *Portrait* 569.
Aetna, Mount: 2.
Agencourt: 497, 498.
Aibre: 513.
Aillelans: 508, 510, 511.
Ailly: 333, 341.
Ain: 434, 529.
Aire, river: 222, 551.
Aisne, river: 206, 208(n), 215(n),
223, 331, 549.
Aissey: 533.
Aisy: 500.
"Alabama", the: 586.
Albert of Saxony, Crown-Prince:
26, 55, 58, 159, 161, 174, 175,
180, 182, 202, 238, 243, 644,
648. *At Gravelotte* 176.
Albert (place): 347, 353, 355, 356,
363, 364.
Albrecht of Prussia, Prince: 56,
59, 95, 342, 346, 349, 351 (and n),
353, 354, 355, 356, 378, 379,
427. *Portrait* 348.
Albrechtshäuser Farm: 84, 88,
90, 91, 95.
Alençons: 365, 451, 464.
" , farm: 343, 346.
Alexander II, of Russia: 31, 597.
Portrait 596.
Algerian Rifles: v. Turkos.
Algiers, French in: 40, 41, 42,
44 (and n), 45, 69, 194, 199, 209,
332, 340, 341, 579.
Allaine, brook: 504, 512, 513, 514,
517, 524, 525.
Allaines: 408.
Allicourt: 232, 239.
Allondans: 504.
Allonville: 343.
"Alma", the: 587, 588.
Alps, the: 6, 23.
Alsace: 100, 485, 487, 488, 503, 609,
610, 611, 618, 620, 648.
" "General Government"
of: 544.
" Lower: 63.
" Upper: 82, 504-9.
Alsen, island: 361.
Altbreisach: 487.
Alt-Stirngen: 111, 114, 116.
Alte Mark, men of the: 146.
Altenburg, Duke of: 631.
Alten, von: 627.
Altenstadt: 76, 77, 79.
Alvensleben, Lt.-Gen. von: 57,
108, 112, 113, 114, 116, 117, 119,
120, 121, 133, 136, 139, 142,
144, 145, 150, 153, 159, 403,
425, 452, 455, 456, 457, 459,
460. *Portrait* 113.
Alvensleben, Gen. von: 57, 159,
161, 180, 199.
Amagne 259.
Amanvillers: 159 (and n), 164,
165, 166, 174, 175, 176, 177,
178, 179, 180, 181, 183.
Amancey: 534.
Amelange: 196.
Amblimont: 233, 238, 244.
Ameil, Gen: 48.
Amiens: 331, 333, 334, 336, 338,
339, 340-2, 343, 347, 349, 356,
357, 358, 359, 361, 363, 364, 366,
376. *Cathedral* 334; *Map of* 335.
Andelans: 503, 504.
Andevanne: 221.
Andrassy, Count: 598.
André, Mme: 628.
Angecourt: 232.
Angerville: 381, 398, 401.
Anneux: 420, 421.
Annweiler: 67.
Anould: 478.
Anoux-la-Grange: 174.
Antilly: 188.
Antony: 265.
Antroches: 381.
Anvillers, castle: 382.
Anvours, Lune d': 459.
" Plateau d': 456, 458,
460, 462, 463.
Apremont: 526, 539.
Arago, Etienne: 260, 290.
Arblay, farm: 422.
Arbois: 529, 531, 532, 533, 534,
535.
Arc de Triomphe, Paris: 270,
326 (and n), 620, 642.
Arc-Senans: 482, 489, 495, 496,
535.
" sur-Tille: 485, 539.
Arcey: 500, 504, 509, 512, 513,
518, 525.
Arches-Château, Les: 459, 460,
462.
"Arcona", the: 570, 579, 581(n),
587.
Arconville: 406.
Ardeche: 403.
Ardenay: 451, 452, 453, 458.
Ardenne, Canal des: 208 (and n).
Argancy: 190.
Argent: 389, 391.
Argenteuil: 277.
Argeuil: 339.
Argonne Forest: 103 (and n),
215, 329, 331,
553, 554.

Argonne Mountains: 217, 329, 550.
 Armançon: 504, 507, 562.
 "Arminius", the: 568, 571, 574, 575, 576, 581 (and n), 582, 586.
Illustration of 580.
 Arnage: 458.
 Arnayville: 134, 139.
 Arnay-le-Duc: 492, 493, 494.
 Arnim, Count Harry: 606, 621, 631.
 Arnold, Col.: 59.
 Arnouville: 269.
 Arpajon: 379.
 Arpenans: 510, 512.
 Arrancy: 549.
 Arras: 338, 340, 348, 351, 353, 354, 355, 356, 364, 375.
 Ars-sur-Moselle: 157, 161, 170.
 Artenay: 378, 379, 381, 383, 396, 401, 410, 418, 420, 421, 422.
 Artillery, French, compared with German: 46—7.
 " German: 54.
 Prussian: 53.
Artilleryman: Bavarian 55;
French 39; *Württemberg* 55.

Artillery, Horse, Prussian: 50.
 Aschbach: 83.
 Aschères-le-Marché: 422.
 Assas: 381, 382.
 Athesans: 508.
 Attigny: 218, 221, 222, 230, 231.
 Attila and the Huns: 331.
 Aubac, Col.: 48.
 Aube, river: 475, 554, 555(n).
 Aubervilliers: 307, 323.
 Aubigny, Château: 125, 189.
 Auboué: 162, 175, 179, 183, 187, 191.
 Auerswald, Col. von: 150. *Death of* 151.
 Augusta of Prussia, Queen: 33, 34(n).
 "Augusta", the: 574, 581(n), 586, 587, 591.
 Augustus of Württemberg, Pr'ce: 57, 159, 161, 177 (and n), 178. *Portrait* 175.
 Aulnay: 267, 271, 307.
 Aurelle de Paladines, Gen. d': 389, 391, 398, 399, 402, 420, 421, 423, 426. *Portrait* 389.
 Austria: 3, 4, 5, 7, 11, 13, 31 (and

n), 33, 38, 68, 120, 506, 597, 598, 599, 602, 606, 621: *v. also* Königgrätz.
 Autechaux: 530.
 Autoreille: 480, 499.
 Autrey-le-Vay: 509, 510.
 Autroche: 419.
 Autun: 487, 490, 492, 493, 494, 496, 506, 557.
 Auxerre: 495, 499, 507, 557, 558, 562, 563.
 Auxon-dessous: 482.
 " -dessus: 482.
 Auxone: 485, 490, 506, 527, 529, 531, 532, 539.
 Avallon: 562.
 Avesnes: 350, 351, 352, 353, 354.
 Avilley: 530.
 Avre, river: 334, 337.
 Aymard, Gen.: 168 (and n).
 Aynès: 366.
 Ayuelle: 251.
 Azay, brook: 447, 450.
 Azores, the: 570, 571, 579, 587.

B

Baalon: 549.
 Baccarat: 475.
 Baccon: 392, 393.
 Baden: 4(n), 28, 49, 65, 611, 612, 615.
 " *Dragoon*: 483.
 " Grand Duchess of: 624.
 " Grand Duke of: 56, 466, 473, 612, 616, 627, 630, 636, 638, 639, 643, 648. *Residence at Versailles* 640.
 " William of: *v. William of Baden, Prince*.
 Bagneux: 263, 267, 280—3.
 Baigneux: 413, 415, 422.
 Bains: 479.
 Balan, Baron: 621.
 " (place): 208, 231, 234, 239, 240, 243. *Attempt to break thro the Park* 253.
 Ballainvillers: 263.
 Ballon: 463.
Balloon pursued by Hussars: 276.
 Baltic, the: 568, 570, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 582, 585, 586, 591.
 Bamberger, Herr: 630.
 Ban St. Martin: 185.
 Bantheville: 221.
 Bapaume: 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 363, 364.
 " Battle of: 350—5. *Map of* 352.
 Bar, river: 221, 235.

Barail, Gen. du: 135, 159.
 Barby, Gen. von: 151.
 Bardeleben, Lieut. von: 249.
 Bar-le-Duc: 214.
 Bar-sur-Aube: 203.
 Barnekow, Gen. von: 57, 113, 148 (and n), 152, 337, 345, 351, 358, 368, 369, 370, 372.
 Baroche (rifleman): 288.
 Barr: 475.
 Barricourt: 222.
 Barry, Gen: 394, 395, 396, 413, 415, 423, 426, 434, 448.
 Bart: 504, 517.
 Barville: 402, 406.
 Basedow, Capt. von: 555.
 Bassart, Col. de: 48.
 Bastoul, Gen.: 168.
 Bataille, Gen.: 109, 118, 139.
 Batilly: 174, 175, 179, 403.
 Baulle: 430, 431, 432, 434.
 Baumbach, Lieut.-Col. von: 626.
 Baume-les-Dames: 500, 527, 530, 531, 535.
 Baumüller: 395.
 Bavaria: 4(n), 10, 28, 29—30 (and n), 49, 65, 72, 98, 104, 595, 611, 612, 613, 615.
 " Louis of: *v. Louis*.
 " Otto of: *v. Otto*.
 " Theodore of: *v. Theodore*.
 Bavarian Chevaux Leger: 641. *Illustration of* 381.
 " *Cuirassier*: 390.
 " *Pioneers*: 540.

Bavarian Troops: 55; *at battle of Beaugency* 435.
 Bavelincourt: 342, 343, 345, 346.
 Baveno: 641.
 Bavilliers: 503, 504.
 Bayonville: 219, 223.
 Bazaine, Marshal: 41—2, 48, 70, 109, 120, 122, 137, 145, 148, 153, 157, 159, 171, 173, 175, 183, 187, 188, 192, 193, 194, 195, 198, 199, 202, 205, 208, 209, 212, 215, 216, 217, 221, 251, 259, 290, 608. *Portrait* 123; *Surprise of, at Vionville* 143.
 Bazeilles: 208, 231—2, 234, 238, 239—41, 242, 243, 251, 252; *After the Fight* 240.
 Bazoches-les-Gallerandes: 378, 421.
 Beauce, the: 380 (and n), 384, 399, 442. *Map of* 441.
 Beauclair: 222, 223.
 Beaucourt: 345, 346.
 Beaudouin, Col.: 48.
 Beaufort, Gen.: 318.
 Beaugency: 400, 421, 423, 424, 428, 430, 434, 435, 436, 438, 440, 445, 446. *Map* 429.
 " Battle of: 428—41. *Illustration* 435.
 Beaumont: 157, 192, 208, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 226, 430, 431, 432, 433, 436, 439, 540. *Map* 224.

- Beaumont, Battle of: 223—30.
 „ -les-Autels: 450.
 Beaune: 485, 489, 490, 492, 493, 494, 496.
 „ -la-Rolande: 295, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 423, 445, 457. *Map* 403.
 „ -la-Rolande, Battle of: 401—7, 410.
 Beauregard: 318.
 Beauvais: 331, 342, 366, 367, 370.
 Beauvert: 433, 434, 436, 437, 439.
 Beauvillers: 412, 414.
 Bebel, Herr: 647 (and n), 648.
 Béchy: 121.
 Becker, Niklas: 65; quoted 595(n).
 Beckedorff, Col. von: 457.
 Behagnies: 350, 354.
 Béhencourt: 345, 346.
 Beire-le-Châtel: 491.
 Bel-Air, Château: 384, 385, 386, 448.
 Belfort: 67, 74, 192, 203, 448, 475, 478, 485, 489, 495, 499, 500, 502, 507, 508, 512, 520, 521, 524, 525, 535, 621. *Map* of 502, *View* 501.
 „ Investment of: 487—8.
 „ Siege of: 500 *sqq.*, 539—41. *Illustration* 540.
 Belgium: 548, 600, 611, 621.
 Belle Alliance, La, Berlin: 649 (and n 1).
 Bellangé, pictures by: 635.
 Bellecroix: 126, 128, 129, 188, 195.
 Bellegarde: 401, 402, 410.
 Belle-Inutile, La: 453, 457.
 Bellemare, Gen.: 300, 301, 303, 304, 316, 318, 321.
 Bellenglise: 366.
 Belleville: 289.
 Bellevue: 196 (and n), 314.
 Bellicourt: 368.
 “Bellone”, the: 587.
 Belt, the Great: 575, 578, 583.
 Benedetti, Count: 13, 17, 21, 570, 600. *Portrait* 19; *v. also* Ems.
 Bennigsen, von: 612.
 Bentheim, Lieut.-Gen. von: 59, 129, 333, 358, 359. *At Colomby* 127.
 Berger, Col. von: 299.
 Bergerie, La: *v. La Bergerie*.
 Bergzabern: 67, 72, 76, 77.
 Berlin: 14, 15, 19, 23, 26, 98, 611, 648—50. *Brandenburg Gate* 651; *Potsdamer Platz* 650; *Siegesäule* 63.
 „ Royal Palace: 26, 61, 593. *Illustration* 23.
 „ Unter den Linden: *v. Unter den Linden*.
 Bern: 499.
 Bernhardt, Lieut.-Col. von: 325—6(n); quoted 617—8(n).
 Bernkastel: 66.
 Bernstorff, Count: 601.
 Berteaucourt: 337.
 Berthaut, Gen.: 295, 297, 300, 321.
 Bertincourt: 349, 351, 357, 365.
 Besançon: 477, 478, 479—80, 482, 483, 484, 485, 487, 488, 495, 499, 500, 502, 505, 506, 508, 525, 527, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 537.
 Bessel, Col. von: 256.
 Bessol, Gen. du: 332, 343, 350, 351, 352, 555, 354, 366, 369, 371, 372.
 Besson, Gen.: 48.
 Bethoncourt: 517, 518, 521. *View* 517, *Combat* at 522.
 Beugnâtre: 350, 351, 353, 354.
 Beust, Count: 596, 599, 602, 603. *Portrait* 598.
 Béverne: 512, 519, 520, 525.
 Beyer, Gen. von: 59, 478, 485, 486, 490, 494.
 Bèze: 483.
 Bians, 533, 536.
 Bicêtre: 265, 266.
 „ Petit: *v. Petit-Bicêtre*.
 Bienvillers: 349, 350, 351.
 Bienwald, wood: 76.
 Bièvre, river: 263, 265, 278.
 Bihucourt: 350, 351, 354.
 Billot, Gen.: 410, 523, 532.
 Binas: 391(n), 431, 432.
 Bingerbrück: 114.
 Biscay, Bay of: 587.
 Bischofshausen, Lieut. von: 559.
 Bismarck, Col. von: 141, 455, 459.
 „ Prince: 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 23, 26—7, 30, 33, 34 (and n), 201, 229 (and n), 253, 254, 256, 271, 317, 325, 593, 595, 596, 600, 601, 603, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 611, 612, 613, 614, 617(n), 618, 620, 621 (and n), 628, 629—30, 631, 636, 638 (and n), 644, 648; quoted 15, 34(n), 593, 609, 610, 616, 617 (and n). *Portraits* 3, 594; *Interview with Napoleon at Donchery* 255, *at Sedan* 602, *Negotiation at Versailles* 620, *Reading Proclamation of German Empire* 616, *Residence in Versailles* 635.
 Bismarck-Bohlen, Count von: 595, 609, 628. *Portrait* 594.
 Bismarck-Schönhausen, Count von: 56.
 Bisson, Gen. 48.
 Bitsch: 67, 72, 74, 78, 79, 81, 82, 83, 84, 87, 95, 96, 97, 98, 102, 608. *Illustration* 101.
 Bittenfeld, Gen. Herwarth von: *v. Herwarth*.
 Black Forest, the: 82.
 Blainville: 475, 478, 479.
 Blamont: 475, 507, 525, 527, 530, 535.
 Blanc-Mesnil: *v. Le Blanc-Mesnil*.
 Blanchard, Gen.: 258, 259.
 Blankenburg, Herr: 611, 612.
 Bleibtreu, Prof.: 257, 631; quoted 104—5, 257—8, 268—9(n).
 Bleichröder, Herr: 620.
 Blesme: 479, 556.
 Blies, the: 108.
 Blieskastel: 66.
 Bligny: 494.
 Blois: 388, 389, 390, 391, 400, 428, 438, 440, 446.
 Blücher, Gen.: 94 (nn 1, 2), 119, 282, 649.
 Blum, Dr. Hans: 622.
 Blume, Maj.: 634; quoted 216.
 Blumenthal, Gen. von: 58, 76, 105, 164, 232, 628, 632, 634, 636, 638, 641, 648. *Portrait* 634.
 „ jun., von: 628.
 Böcking, Col. von: 364, 365, 367.
 Boeger, Dr.: 621.
 Boguslawski, Capt. von: 321.
 Bohain: 372, 375.
 Bohemia: 56 (n 3).
 Bohemian Campaign: 56.
 Böhn, Lieut.-Col. von: 418.
 Boigny: 424.
 Bois Bourgeois: 522.
 „ Chevalier: 244.
 „ Commun: 402, 407.
 „ de Falizette: 248.
 „ de Fery: 524.
 „ de Givodeau: *v. Givodeau*.
 „ de la Garenne: 238, 243, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 265, 266.
 „ de la Cusse: 165, 166, 180. *Memorial* at 181.
 „ de la Lande: 303, 304.
 „ de la Thure: 519, 520, 521, 523.
 „ de Nouart: 222.
 „ de Vaux: 159, 161, 162, 163, 168, 172.
 „ des Dames: 222.
 „ des Evants: 523.
 „ des Genivaux: 163.
 „ des Ognons: 161.
 „ du Boulogne, Paris: 642. *Illustration* 292.
 Boisson, Gen.: 405.
 Bolbec: 358.
 Bonboillon: 506.
 Boncourt: 496, 497.
 Bondy: 269, 306, 307, 310.
 Bonie, Lieut.-Col.: 248; quoted 206.
 Bonin, Gen. von: 59.
 Bonnemain, Vicomte de: 48, 92, 204, 234.
 Bonnetable: 457, 463.
 Bonnet, Gen.: 404.
 Bonneval: 398, 399, 401, 407.
 Bonneville: 394.
 Bonvalet: 436, 437, 439.
 Borde-Martin: 410.

- Bordeaux: 532, 533, 586, 617, 618, 620, 642, 643.
 Bordone: 527.
 Borel, M.: 391.
 Borkum: 571 (and n).
 Borny: 125, 126, 128.
 Bose, Gen. von: 58, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 94, 99. *Portrait* 87.
 Bothmer, Gen. von: 58, 72, 76, 77, 281, 322.
 Bouchoir: 333.
 Bouclans: 533.
 Bouët-Villaumez, Vice-Adm.: 570, 575, 577, 579, 581, 582, 583, 584.
 Bourgival: 283, 632, 640.
 Bouillon: 255.
 Boulay: 423, 426.
 Bouloire: 447, 451.
 Boulzicourt: 551 (and n), 552.
 Bourbaki, Gen.: 47, 124, 315, 332, 421, 425, 440, 448, 464, 500, 504, 505, 507, 508, 513, 520, 523, 524, 527, 529, 530, 533, 564. *Portrait* 506.
 Bourdillon, Gen.: 391, 395, 411, 437.
 Bourgachard: 359, 360.
 Bourg-la-Reine: 265, 267, 281.
 Bourges: 379, 387, 428, 429, 479, 482, 490, 500, 504, 505.
 Bourgheroulde: 358, 359, 360.
 Bourras, Col.: 484, 527.
 Bourse, the: 25, 80.
 Boutaucourt: 230.
 "Bouvet", the: 589, 590, 591.
 Bouzonville: 67.
 Boves: 334, 337.
 Boyelles: 355.
 Boyen, Gen. von: 627.
 Boyer, Gen.: 198, 610.
 Boynes: 401, 402, 406, 437.
 Brahaut, Gen.: 48, 219, 248.
 Brandenburg, Count: 149, 150.
 " E.: 14(n).
 " Frederick of: v. Brandenburg.
 " Gate, Berlin: 649.
 " Prussia: 3, 6-7.
 Bray: 363, 375.
 " Count: 612.
 Braye, brook: 448, 451.
 Bredow, Col. von: 145-7, 504, 512, *Portrait* 144; *Assault by his Brigade* 146; *Charge at Vionville* 145.
 Bremen: 415(n).
 Bremerhaven: 574, 576.
 Brest: 579, 586.
 Breteuil: 340.
 Bréville: 517, 518, 520, 521.
 Briant, Gen.: 333, 339, 340.
 Bricon: 561.
 Bricy: 385, 423, 426.
 Brie: 294, 295, 297, 366.
 Brinkamahof: 582.
 Brienon: 561, 562.
 Briey: 163, 187, 203, 218.
 Brionne: 358, 359.
 Briou: 439.
 Brisac: 405.
Brittany, Troops of: 41.
 Brives: 457.
 Broecker, Col. von: 57.
 Bronikowski; Maj. von: 371, 373.
 Bronsart von Schellendorf: v. Schellendorf.
 Bronzetti, Col.: 58.
 Brou: 306, 400, 447, 450.
 Brouvelieures: 478.
 Brumath: 99.
 Brussels: 620, 621.
 Bruville: 149, 161, 162, 164. *Illustration* 162.
 Bruyères: 478.
 Bry: 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305.
 Bucey-les-Gy: 480.
 Bucher, Lothar: 15, 595, 628.
 Buchy: 123.
 Bucquoy: 348, 349, 354.
 Bucy-le-Roi: 382.
 Buddenbrock, Gen. von: 57, 113, 139, 140, 456. *Portrait* 141.
 Budritzki, Lieut.-Gen. von: 57, 288.
 Bülow, Gen. von: 65(n), 114, 117, 140.
 Bund, the: v. German Confederation.
 Burg, Lieut.-Col. von der: 59.
 Bürgel, Capt.: 386.
 Burnside, Gen.: 609.
 Burr-Portier (Amer. soldier): 433.
 Burt, Herr von: 634.
 Busse, Col. von: 126, 359.
 Bussières: 481.
 Bussurel: 513, 517, 518, 521, 522, 524. *View of* 522.
 Bussy: 343, 344, 346.
 Busy: 531, 533.
 Buthier: 481.
 Butricourt: 161.
 Buxières: 139, 140, 157.
 Buzancy: 206, 215, 216, 219, 220, 221, 223.
 Buzenval: 318, 320, 321, 322, 323. *Heights of* 321.
 " Château: 283, 284.
 Buzières: 159.
 Byans: 529, 530.

C

- Cachy: 335, 336.
 Cabyles, French struggles with: 340.
 Cadore, Duke of: 577-8, 596.
 Cadorna, Gen.: 606.
 Café Pierson: 632.
 Cagny: 334.
 Caix: 333.
 Calvaire d'Illy: 208, 234, 235, 238, 246, 250.
 Cambrai: 338, 348, 349, 353, 354, 368, 371, 374, 375.
 Cambriels, Gen.: 477, 478, 479, 480, 483.
 Camô, Gen.: 428, 430, 431, 434, 435, 436.
 Camon: 343.
 Canrobert, Marshal: 48, 124, 139, 144, 145, 159, 172, 180. *Portrait* 180.
 Canu, Gen.: 48.
 Caprivi, Col. von: 58, 138, 145. *Portrait* 138.
 Carignan: 207, 208, 226, 232, 233, 239, 246, 252.
 Carl: v. Karl, and Charles.
 Carlyle, Thomas: quoted 20, 65, 616(n).
 Carrières-les-Crottes: 392, 394.
 Cassagnac: 20.
 Castagny, Gen. de: 48.
 Castelnau, Gen.: 253.
 Castres: 369, 371.
 Cathelineau, Gen.: 391.
 Catholicism in Germany: 1.
 "Caudine Forks are ready for Prussia, The": 20.
 Caudry: 375.
 Caulaincourt: 366, 367.
 Caulre, farm: 162, 164, 182, 183.
 Caussade, Gen.: 266, 267.
 Cavalry, French compared with German: 46.
 " Prussian 53.
 " South-German 54.
 " Bavarian 55.
 " Württemberg 55.
 Cazal: 248, 249, 250.
 Celle, brook: 334, 337.
 Censeau: 534, 537.
 Centgarde: 204.
 Cépny: 371.
 Cercottes: 385, 386, 396, 423, 425.
 Cernay: 432, 433, 439.
 Chablis: 500.
 Chaffois: 533, 536, 537.
 Chagey: 512, 513, 514, 517, 518, 519, 523, 524. *View of* 519.
 Chagny: 490, 491, 493, 500.
 Châlons-sur-Marne: 67, 101, 102, 122, 185, 202, 203, 204, 205, 209, 210, 212, 217.

- 218, 271, 551, 554, 555.
Map of Armies before
 211.
- Châlons-sur-Saône: 491, 495, 500,
 505, 506.
- Challonsvillars: 512, 524
- Chambière: 185, 192.
- Chamblay: 138, 159.
- Chambœuf: 491, 497, 499.
- Chambon: 410, 424.
- Chambord: 438.
- Champ-de-la-Grange: 248, 249.
- " de-Mars, Paris: 326.
- Champagnole: 529, 532, 533, 534,
 536, 537.
- Champagne: 255, 331, 456, 459.
- Champagney: 517.
- Champenois: 166, 167.
- Champey: 134.
- Champigny: 283, 294, 295, 297, 298,
 299, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 643.
- Champlitte: 526.
- Champs: 394, 395.
- " Elysées, Paris: 326, 642,
 643.
- Champy: 222.
- Changarnier, Gen.: 198.
- Changé: 455, 456, 457, 458, 459.
- Changy: 215.
- Chanteloup: 263, 463.
- Chantôme: 391.
- Chantrans: 534.
- Chantrenne: 166, 167, 177.
- Chanzy, Gen.: 398, 410, 413, 424,
 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 436,
 438, 439, 442, 443, 444, 445,
 448, 449, 453, 454, 458, 459,
 462, 464, 504, 505. *Portrait* 428.
- Chapelle: v. La Chapelle.
- Chapelle-des-Bois: 537.
- Charenton: 293. *View near* 324.
- Charlemagne: 6(n).
- Charles V (Spain): 19, 20(n).
- " VII (France): 7.
- " of Prussia, Prince: 56,
 638, 639, 642.
- " of Roumania, King: 13,
 14, 15, 16.
- " Theodore, Duke of
 Bavaria: 58.
- Charly: 188.
- Charsonville: 391, 392.
- Chartre-sur-le-Loir: 447, 448, 451,
 452.
- Chartres: 379, 382, 384, 385, 388,
 391, 398, 408, 444, 447.
- " Chasse-Prusses", the: 166(n).
- Chassepot Rifle: 45. *Illustration*
 of 45.
- Chasseurs d'Afrique: v. Military
 Idex. *Illustration of* 158.
- Château Belleville (Frénois): 255.
View of 257.
- " Bellevue (Bazeilles):
 241.
- " Chévilley: v. Chévilley.
- " de Joux: 538. *Retreat*
 at 538.
- Château du Loir: 452.
- " Gaillard: 422.
- " Goury: 412, 414, 515,
 416, 417.
- " Montvillers: 243.
- " Porcien: 259.
- " Rouge: 268.
- " Thierry: 261.
- " Vilain: 560, 561.
- Châteaudun: 381, 387-8, 388,
 391, 392, 399, 400,
 410(n), 421, 423.
 Battle of: 388.
- Châteauneuf: 494.
- " en-Thimerais: 399.
- " sur-Loire: 392.
- Châtel: 185.
- Chatenay: 264, 265, 266, 281, 631,
 635.
- Châtillon: 223, 280, 281, 282, 491.
View of 270.
- " Battle of: 263, 301.
- " Plateau of: 264, 266,
 267, 268, 269, 281, 311,
 316.
- " Porte-de: 268.
- " le-Duc: 482.
- " sur-Lizon: 531.
- " sur-Seine: 475, 483,
 493, 494, 507, 514, 525, 556,
 557, 559, 561, 564.
- Chatou: 321, 322.
- Chaucenne: 482.
- Chaulnes: 376.
- Chaumont: 203 (and n), 397, 475,
 478, 479, 507, 556,
 557, 559, 560, 561,
 564.
- " sur-Arme: 214.
- Chaussée-sur-Marne: 215.
- Chauvaney: 221.
- Chaux: 496, 497, 499, 518.
- Chavanne: 513.
- Chécyc: 424.
- Chegny: 489.
- Chemery: 230, 231, 232.
- Cheminières: 394.
- Chenebier: 513, 517, 519, 520,
 521, 523, 524, 525. *View of* 521.
- Chennevières: 293, 298, 304.
- Cherbourg: 574, 575, 577, 578,
 579, 582, 584.
- Chestres: 554.
- Chevaux: 423.
- " Leger: 641. *Illustration*
 381.
- Cheveuges: 231.
- Cheville: 280.
- Chevilly: 278-9, 378, 379, 381,
 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425.
- Chevremont: 504.
- Chiers: 208, 232, 233, 234, 235.
- Chilleux-aux-Bois: 410, 413, 421,
 422.
- China, French in: 40, 69, 570,
 587, 588.
- Choisy-le-Roi: 278, 279.
- Christine, Queen: 326(n).
- Chuquet, quoted: 264, 266, 267,
 269, 270, 271-2, 289, 302, 316,
 325.
- Cissey, Gen. de: 48, 127, 165, 174.
- Citeaux: 496.
- Civita Vecchia: 45, 209.
- Claer, Maj. de: 634.
- " Gen. von, quoted: 312-14.
- Clairegoutte: 525.
- Clairvaux: 397.
- Clamart: 267, 281, 315.
- Clappier, Col.: 47.
- Clary: 375.
- Claye: 263.
- Clérembault, Gen.: 48.
- Clermont: 218, 333, 550, 551, 553.
- Cléron: 532.
- Clerval: 488, 506, 509, 527, 530.
- Cléry: 365.
- Clinchant, Gen.: 533, 536, 538.
- Clizy: 220.
- Clos-Ferme: 394.
- " Moussu: 437, 439.
- Cloyes: 389.
- Coasts, German, Map of:* 572.
- Coburg, Duke of: 627, 639.
- Coeuilly: 295, 297, 298, 299, 300,
 302, 303, 304. *Queen Olga*
Grenadiers at 298.
- Coffinières de Nordeck, Gen.
 v. Nordeck.
- Cognère: 433.
- Cohernières: 460.
- Coinces: 426, 427.
- Coincy: 126, 190.
- Coinville: 174.
- Coiseveaux: 520.
- Colin, Gen.: 433, 437(n), 456.
- Colligny: 126.
- Colmar: 487.
- Colomb, Gen. von: 326(n), 419.
- Colombey: 124, 125, 126, 128.
- " Battle of: 122-30,
 132, 133, 329. *Illu-*
stration of 127.
- " *Farm:* 124.
- Colson, Gen.: 48.
- Combeaufontaine: 480, 500.
- Combles: 349, 356, 357, 364.
- Commercy: 203, 210.
- Commune in Paris: 289, 316.
- Compiègne: 329, 331.
- Concoeur: 497, 498.
- Conflans: 122, 161, 163, 203, 479,
 555 (and n), 556.
- Conlie: 400.
- Connerré: 447, 452, 455, 460.
- Conscription in France: 42-3
 (and n), 546(n).
- " in Germany: 35,
 37, 38, 50, 51.
- Conseil Dumont: v. Dumont.
- Constantine: 341.
- 'Constitutionnel, Le', quoted: 20.
- Conta, Col. von: 196, 455.
- " Maj. von: 528.
- Contay: 346.
- Contenson, Col. de: 228.

- Contescourt: 369, 370, 371.
 Contrexéville: 560.
 Coole: 218.
 Copenhagen: 577, 578, 596.
 Corbeil: 263; *Bridge blown up* 293.
 Corbeille: 637.
 Corbeilles: 403, 404.
 Corbie: 336, 343.
 Corcelles-les-Monts: 491, 497.
 Corcieux: 478.
 Cormainville: 408 (and n), 420.
 Cornay: 122.
 Cornelius, Peter von: 635 (and n).
 Corny: 192, 198.
 Côte-d'Or: 479, 485, 490 (and n), 491, 499, 527, 544, 618.
 Coudray, Château: 433, 440.
 Coulmiers: 293, 387—96, 409, 423, 446. *Map of* 393.
 " Battle of: 291, 397, 398.
 Coulommiers: 555.
 Courboux: 480.
 Courcelles: 406.
 Courchamp: 520, 523, 524.
 Courneuve: 285, 306, 307.
 Courtaulin: 400.
 Courty: 318.
 Couternon: 487.
 Couthenans: 512, 513.
 Cravant: 391, 392, 432, 433, 436, 437, 439, 445.
 Crecy: 561, 562.
 " Battle of: 83.
 Creisau: 32.
 Crémer, Gen.: 491, 492, 494, 495, 496, 505, 506, 513, 518, 519, 520, 523, 524, 527, 530, 532, 533, 536, 537, 538. *Portrait* 490.
 Créteil: 263, 294, 297, 301, 303.
 Creuzy: 422.
 Crimean War, the: 36, 40, 41, 42, 570, 580, 635.
 Croissy: 277, 280.
 Croix: 238, 504, 517.
 " -Briquet: *v.* La Croix-Briquet.
 " -de-Bernis: 265.
 " -de-Landy: 344.
 Cross, the Iron: *v.* Iron cross.
 Crottes: *v.* Les Crottes.
 Crown-Prince of Prussia (Friedrich Wilhelm): 15, 28, 30, 55, 58, 73, 75, 76, 79, 81, 82—3, 87, 88, 89, 94, 96, 100, 102, 213, 217, 232, 235, 238, 247, 255, 256, 277, 317, 318, 322, 612—3, 614, 615, 616, 624, 627, 628, 629, 631, 632, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 648, 650. *Portraits* 74, 652.
 Crown-Prince of Saxony: 210, 216, 217, 218, 221, 223, 226, 233, 235, 238, 269, 273. *Portrait* 219.
 Crouzat, Gen.: 402, 403, 406, 410, 424, 491.
 Crozat Canal: 368.
 Crusius, Col.: 57.
 Cubrial: 527.
 Cucufa: *v.* St. Cucufa.
 Cuirassier, *Bavarian*: 55.
 " *French*: 39, 44.
 " *Prussian*: 50.
 Cuny: 425.
 Cuse: 509.
 Cussey: 481, 482.
 Cuxhaven: 571, 579, 585.

D

- Dadonville: 406 (and n).
 Daigny: 240, 242, 243, 244, 245, 251.
 Daix: 492, 528.
 Dallou: 368.
 Dambron: 381, 382, 408, 421, 422.
 Dame-Rose, wood: 266.
 Dammartin: 263.
 Dampier-sur-Salon: 500, 506, 531.
 Damvillers: 186, 218, 549.
 Danjoutin: 501, 504.
 Dannenberg, Maj.-Gen. von: 57, 507, 525, 560.
 Dannmarie: 532.
 Danton, G. J.: 6.
 Danzig: 568, 574, 575, 582, 586.
 Daours: 344, 346.
 Dariés: 392, 395.
 Darois: 492, 493.
 Daru: 17.
 Daucourt: 210.
 D'Aurelle de Paladines, Gen.: *v.* Aurelle.
 D'Auvergal, Gen.: 47.
 Debschitz, Gen. von: 500, 504, 512, 517, 520, 524, 525, 530, 535, 537, 540.
 De la Briche, fort: 271.
 " Sonis, Gen.: 400.
 Des Pallières, Gen.: 390.
 Decaen, Gen.: 48.
 Decken, Lieut. von der: 233.
 Decker, Gen. von: 467.
 Declaration of War: 25—6.
 Deflandre, Col.: 433, 437, 439, 483.
 Degenfeld, Gen. von: 474, 475, 476, 477, 480, 492, 493, 497, 499, 500, 517, 519, 520, 521, 524, 539. *Portrait* 477.
 Delbrück, Minister: 15, 611, 614, 628; quoted 14(n). *Portrait* 594.
 Deligny, Gen.: 47.
 Delle: 488, 504, 512, 514.
 Denfert, Col.: 488, 501, 541. *Portrait* 489.
 Denmark: 13, 31, 596, 611; *v.* also Schleswig-Holstein.
 Dennewitz, Battle of [1813]: 65 (and n).
 Deplanque: 395, 411, 415, 436, 455.
 Deroja, Gen.: 332, 334, 343, 346, 350, 351, 352, 353, 370, 371.
 Déservillers: 532.
 Despres, Col.: 48.
 Desvaux, Gen.: 47.
 Deutsch-Mühle: 110.
 Deux Ponts: *v.* Zweibrücken.
 Deycimont: 478.
 Diedenhofen: *v.* Thionville.
 Dieffenbach: 83, 85, 87.
 Diehl, Col. von: 265, 266, 267, 268.
 Dietl, Gen. von: 240, 411.
 Dietz, Prof.: 630, 632.
 Dieudonné, Rear-Adm.: 570.
 Dieulet, forest: 224.
 Dieulouard: 121, 132, 136.
 Dijon: 479, 482, 483, 485, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 499, 500, 505, 506, 513, 526, 527, 528, 529, 531, 532, 539, 560, 561, 564. *Map of* 486.
 Dijon: Battle of: 485—7.
 Dobschütz, Lieut.-Col. von: 564.
 Dohna, Count: 363, 365, 367, 375.
 Dôle: 479, 482, 483, 489, 490, 495, 496, 499, 505, 506, 526, 531, 539.
 Dollen, Maj. von der: 146.
 Dom-le-Mesnil: 247, 250, 251.
 Domainville: 420.
 Domart: 337.
 Dombaste: 217, 218.
 Donchéry: 208 (and n), 230, 231, 238, 251, 253, 254, 255, 603.
 Doncourt: 122, 137, 161, 162, 163, 181, 185, 186. *View of* 162.
 Doncy: 423.
 Donon: 475.
 Döring, Gen. von: 113, 114, 119, 140.
 Dormans: 555.
 Douay, Gen. Abel: 48, 74, 75, 76, 77, 82. *Portrait* 76.
 " Gen. Felix: 48, 204, 208, 251, 275. *Portrait* 234.
 Double-Couronne, fort: 271.
 Doubs, Dept. of: 544, 618.
 " river: 488, 499, 500, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 508, 513, 526, 527, 529, 530, 531, 533, 534.
 " the Upper: 504, 506.
 Dournon: 537.
 Douzy: 208, 209, 231, 233, 234, 238, 241.

- Douzy: Fight at: 230-2.
 Dover: 575, 578.
 Dracy-St. Loup: 494.
 Dragoons, French: 44. *Illustration* 39.
 German: 50.
 Drahtzug: 116, 118.
 Drancy: 285, 286, 309.
 Dresky, Col. von: 57, 139.
 Dresow, Maj.: 628.
 Dreux: 399, 632, 636.
 Dugeon, brook: 533, 537.
 Du Barail, Gen.: 48, 185.
 Bessol: *v.* Bessol.
 Dubois, Gen.: *v.* Jaucigny.
 Duclair: 358.
- Ducrot, Gen.: 48, 92, 94, 204, 242, 251, 264, 266, 268, 271, 283, 285, 292, 293, 294, 297, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 307, 308-9, 309, 316, 318, 321, 322, 324, 413, 610; quoted 224, 267, 281, 282, 289, 295, 297, 299, 301, 303, 304, 305, 308, 310, 315-6, 317-8, 322, 323, *Portrait* 265.
 Dudweiler: 113.
 Dugny: 437.
 Duhesme, Gen.: 48.
 Dulac, Lieut.-Col.: 119.
 Dumesnil, Gen. Conseil: 48, 82, 89, 203, 226.
- Dumont, Gen.: 48.
 Dun: 213, 214, 218, 221.
 "Dunderberg", the: 584.
 Dung: 517.
 Dunquerque: 585.
 "Dupleix", the: 587, 588.
 Düppel, Storming of [1864]: 132, 155, 183.
 Dupré, Adm.: 587, 588.
 Gen.: 477.
 Dürkheim: 67.
 Durochat: 406.
 Dürrenbach: 84, 88, 90, 91.
 Dury: 337, 338.

E

- Eagle captured at Wörth, French*: 98.
 Eberbach: 84, 90, 91, 95, 96.
 Echenans: 519, 520.
 Echenoz-le-Sec: 506, 507.
 Echevanne: 523, 524.
 Eckert, Col. von: *Portrait* 179.
 Ecommoy: 461.
 Ecuillon: 413.
 Edict of Nantes: 110(n).
 Education in Germany, Influence of: 37.
Egelsville, Engagement at: 558.
 Egriselle-le-Bocage: 559.
 Eider, canal: 576.
 river: 574
 Eix: 214.
 Elbe, river: 570, 571, 574, 576, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 585, 587. *Map of its Estuary* 573.
 Elbœuf: 358, 359, 360.
 "Elisabeth", the: 571, 574, 575, 576, 581(n), 585, 586.
 Elsass: *v.* Alsace.
 Elsasshausen: 83, 84, 89, 90, 92, 93, 95, 96. *Charge of French Cuirassiers upon* 91.
 Elterlein, Col. von: 242.
- Emagny: 482.
 Empire, Fall of the French: 259-60.
 Ems: 13, 16, 21, 22, 23, 26, 33(n), 574, 575, 582, 585. *The Park* 20.
 Endres, Maj.: 377(n).
 Engelshof: 96.
 England: 31 (and n), 33, 600, 601, 602, 621.
 Epéhy: 349, 355.
 Epernay: 554, 555, 556, 624, 625, 626.
 Epieds: 394.
 Epinal: 475, 478, 479, 479-80, 483, 548, 560, 564.
 Epinay: 302, 306.
 Epinettes, Les: 461.
 Epte, river: 339.
 Epuisay: 447, 451.
 Erise-la-petite: 218.
 Ervillers: 350.
 Esch, Col. von: 58, 111.
 Esprels: 505, 506, 508, 509, 510.
 Essert: 503, 504.
 Essertaux: 333, 337.
 Essertenne: 483.
 Esserts, Bois des: 523.
- Essigny-le-Grand: 368, 369, 370, 372.
 Estrées: 366, 367.
 Etain: 218, 549.
 Etampes: 379, 380.
 Etappes, Organization of the *German*: 542 *sqq.*
 Eternoz: 534.
 Etobon: 517, 519, 520, 523, 524.
 Etrechy: 380.
 Etreillers: 365, 368, 370.
 Etival: 475, 476.
 Etuz: 480, 481, 506, 531.
 Eugene, Prince: 616(n).
 of Württemberg, Prince [1813] *v.* Württemberg.
 Erdmann, Duke: *v.* Württemberg.
 Eugénie, Empress: 24, 33, 260, 332.
 Eulenburg, Count: 34(n); quoted 637.
 Eupatoria: 570.
 Eure, river: 400.
 Evreux: 340, 399.
 Exéa, Gen. d': 271, 300, 303.
 Exincourt: 504, 517.

F

- Fabeck, Gen. von: 563.
 Fabrice, Lieut.-Gen. von: 60, 644. *Portrait* 645.
 Faiderbe, Gen.: 307, 332, 340-1, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 353, 355, 357, 363, 366, 367, 368, 372, 374, 505. *Portrait* 340.
 Faily, Gen. de: 48, 74, 96, 184, 188, 189, 190, 203, 204, 207, 209, 210, 222, 224, 227. *Portrait* 225.
 Falckenhausen, Col. von: 460.
 "Falke", the: 586.
 Falkenstein, brook: 84, 95.
- Falkenstein, Gen. Vogel von: *v.* Vogel.
 Falster: 583.
 Faron's Division: 295, 298, 300, 303, 322.
 Farre, Gen.: 332. *Portrait* 332.
 Faubourg-Mouzon: 227, 228, 229.
 Fauconnet, Col.: 485.
 Faulquemont: 122.
 Fauvernay: 539.
 Faverney: 475.
 Faverolles: 411.
- Favre, Jules: 259, 260, 271, 289, 316, 317, 318, 324, 325, 601, 603, 604, 606, 608, 610, 617(n), 618, 621, 635, 639; quoted 608, 617 (and n). *Portrait* 603.
 Favreuil: 350, 351, 352, 353, 354.
 Fay-aux-Loges: 424.
 Fayal: 570.
 Faye, Gen.: 391, 392, 396.
 Fayet: 368, 370, 371.
 Feige, Capt.: 405.
 'Feldsoldatenfreund', the: 622.
 Fénélon, Col.: 48.

- Fénélon: Gen. de Salignac: *v.* Salignac.
 Ferrières: 271, 608, 623, 635. *Castle* 607.
 Ferté-Bernard, La: *v.* La Ferté.
 Feularde, farm: 437, 438.
 Fèves: 186 (and *n.*).
Field-gun, French: 38.
 " *Prussian*: 53.
 Fiereck, Gen.: 391, 399.
 Filian: 506.
 Finckenstein, Col. Finck von: 225.
 Fins: 349, 364, 365.
First Army in the North, Map of Campaign: 330.
Flag, the German Imperial: 616.
 Flanders, French: 331.
 Flatow, Col. von: 455, 459.
 Flavigny: 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 154, 156, 157(*n.*), 159, 162, 200(*n.*). *View of 136, Memorial at 152.*
 Flavy-le-Martel: 365.
 Fleet and the Coast, the: 567—92.
 " French, compared with the German: 49.
 Fleigneux: 245, 248.
 Fleury: 218, 281.
 " *-sur-Ouche*: 493.
 Flize: 208 (and *n.*), 209, 231, 251.
 Floing: 208, 234, 235, 247, 248, 249, 250. *Assault upon 250; Heights 246.*
 Florence: 31, 120, 605, 606.
 Florida: 589.
 Flourens, Gen.: 289.
 Foinard: 430.
 Folster Heights: 112, 117, 118.
 Foncine-le-Bas: 536, 537.
 Fond-de-Givonne: 243.
 Fontaine: 490, 527, 528, 529.
 " *Battle of*: 528.
 Fontainebleau: 315, 378, 398, 413.
 " *wood*: 305.
 Fontay: 187.
 Fontenay: 267, 268 (and *n.*), 281.
 Fontenoy: 563, 564.
 Forbach: 67, 106, 109, 110, 114, 117, 119.
 Forckenberck, President von: 640.
 Forges: *v.* Les Forges.
 Förster, Lieut. von: 554.
 Förster: 351, 352, 366, 369.
 Forteresse de la Miotte, Belfort: 501.
 Forteresse de la Justice, Belfort: 501.
 Forton, Gen. de: 48, 135, 144, 146, 159, 185.
 " (place): 451.
 Fossé: 222.
 Fouencamp: 335, 337.
 Fougeu: 417, 418.
Four Generations, The: 652.
 Fourichon, Adm.: 570, 579, 580, 581, 582, 584.
 Foulain: 560.
 Fouilleuse, La: *v.* La Fouilleuse.
 Frahier: 513, 514, 517, 520, 521, 523, 524, 525.
 Francheval: 238, 245.
 Francilly: 370, 371, 373.
 François, Gen. von: 110 (and *n.*), 111, 112, 116.
 Franconia: 104.
 Francs-Tireurs: *v.* Military Index.
Illustration of 42; Garibaldian 557.
 Frankenthal: 67.
 Frankfort-am-Maine: 621.
 Franquet, Commander: 589—91.
 Fransecky, Gen. von: 59, 159, 171, 304, 507, 532, 534, 536.
Portrait 304.
 Franvillers: 343.
 Frasné: 533, 537, 538.
 Frechencourt: 343, 345.
 Frederick, of Baden: *v.* Baden.
 " of Brandenburg (III): 616(*n.*).
 " of Hesse, Landgrave: 57.
 " of Hohenzollern: 15, 150.
 " Charles of Prussia: 55, 57, 108, 112, 114, 119, 120, 123, 131—2, 133—48, 150, 152, 154, 155, 156, 157, 161, 162, 163, 173, 174, 178, 180, 181, 182, 183, 185, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 195, 196, 198, 200, 202, 295, 401, 407, 438, 442, 444, 445, 446, 447, 451, 453, 454, 459, 461, 484, 556, 557, 561, 591, 648. *Portraits 132, 446; After Vionville 156.*
 " Francis of Mecklenburg-Schwerin: *v.* Mecklenburg.
 Frederick, the Great: 37, 407 (and *n.*); quoted 37(*n.*).
 " William I: 37.
 " " II, Monument of: 650.
 " " IV: 328.
 " " *v.* Crown-Prince of Prussia.
 Fredrikshavn: 575.
 Freiligrath, Friedrich: 147 (and *n.*).
 'Freie Presse' (Chemnitz), the quoted: 648.
 'Freiwilliger': 52 (and *nn* 1, 2), 63.
 Frémicourt: 350, 351, 353.
 French Army, the: 35—6, 39—49.
 " *Camp, A Forsaken*: 316.
 " *Fleet*: 578.
 " *Marine, A*: 344.
 " *Railways held by Germans, Map of*: 544.
 " Revolution [1789]: 2, 7, 18, 35 (and *n.*), 69.
 " *Territories held by Germans, Map of*: 543.
 " *Troops*: 39, 41, 42, 43.
 Frènes-les-Rungis: 265.
 Frénois: 208, 209, 230, 231, 236, 241, 251, 252, 255.
 Fréteval: 442, 444.
 Fretigny: 480.
 Freycinet, M.: 389, 391, 505, 610.
 Freydorff, Herr von: 625, 631.
 Fricker, Lieut.: 239.
 Friedenthal, von: 612.
 "Friedrich Karl", the: 568, 569, 579, 587.
 Friedrich: *v.* Frederick.
 " Wilhelm of Prussia: *v.* Crown-Prince.
 Friedrichsort, forts at: 568.
 Friesen, Capt. von: 233.
 " Herr von: 612, 631.
 " Maj. von: 215.
 Frommshagen, Lieut.: 557.
 Fröschweiler: 74, 82, 83, 84, 87, 89, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 105.
 " *View of 85. Assault on 92.*
 " Pastor of: 73, 82, 96.
 Frossard, Gen.: 48, 70, 81, 106, 109, 124, 139, 134, 159. *Portrait 109.*
 Funcke, Lieut.-Col.: 58, 242.
 "Fürst", the word explained: 621(*n.*).

G

- Galgenberg: 112, 113, 114, 116, 117.
 Gallifet, Gen.: 247, 250, 629.
 Gambetta, Léon: 25, 261, 292, 305, 317, 363, 377, 389, 391, 448, 479, 508, 546, 550, 585, 603, 607, 609, 610, 617, 618, 641. *Portrait 606.*
 Garches, Heights of: 316, 318, 320, 322.
 Garde Mobile, its constitution: 42; *v.* also Military Index.
 " *Officers 208, 480; Troops 39, 41, 526.*

- Garde National Sédentaire: 43, 102; *v.* also Military Index.
 Garenne, La: *v.* Bois de Garenne.
 Garges: 286, 294.
 Garibaldi, Joseph: 44, 479, 482, 484, 487, 489, 490, 492—4, 495, 496, 505, 506, 513, 526, 527, 529, 532, 602, 634. *Portrait* 491.
 Garibaldian Troops: 457. *Illustrations* 492, 557.
 Ricciotti: 491, 557.
 'Gaulois', the, quoted: 20.
 Gayl, Maj.-Gen. von: 370, 373, 375.
 Geisberg: 74, 75, 76, 77, 78—9, 80. *View of* 78; *After the battle* 78.
 Gémigny: 396.
 "Généraux Mamelouks": 194.
 Geneuille: 481.
 Geney: 527.
 Geniusbank: 574.
 Genivaux: 166.
 Genévilliers: 283, 284, 290, 291, 293, 325.
 Genouilly, Rigault de: 584.
 Gentelles: 335, 336—7.
 George of Saxe-Meiningen, Duke: 58.
 " of Saxony, Prince: 26, 56, 58, 214, 222, 226, 241, 300, 303. *Portrait* 220.
 Germaine: 564.
 German Armies, the: *Illustrations. v.* Prussian Troops.
 South German Troops.
 Fleet: 577.
 Germania, statue of, Berlin: 650.
 Germersheim: 67.
 Gersdorff, Gen. von: 58, 99, 247, 248, 256. *Portrait* 247.
 Gevrey: 491, 496, 497, 498.
 Gibets: 283.
 Gidy: 385, 420, 424, 525, 426.
 Gien: 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 399, 401, 424, 425, 429, 438, 445.
 Gifert, wood: 111, 112, 116, 117.
 Girard, Gen.: 249.
 Girecourt: 478.
 Giromagny: 488.
 Gironde, the: 586.
 Gislain: 369.
 Gisor: 339.
 Givodeau, village and farm: 229.
 " wood: 226, 227.
 Givonne, town and river: 234, 235, 236, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 248. *Map of* 244.
 Givry-en-Argonne: 210, 215.
 Gladstone, W. E.: 597.
 Gland, river: 504.
 Glümer, Gen. von: 57, 119, 478, 494, 496, 499, 517, 518, 522. *Portrait* 494.
 Gneisenau, Count von: 70, 94 (and *n* 1), 95, 119, 169.
 Gnichenbach: 108—9, 110.
 Göben, Gen. von: 57, 113, 157(n), 159, 162, 169, 171, 337, 338, 339, 341, 349, 353, 354, 355, 356, 360—3, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 371, 372, 374, 375, 376. *Portrait* 361.
 Goethe, J. W. von: on Qu. Louise 27(n); quoted 61.
 Göhler, Capt. von: 643.
 Goldene Bremme, farm: 114, 117, 118, 119. *Advance of 77th on* 115.
 Goltz, Gen. von der: 58, 124, 125, 126, 170, 171, 493, 494, 495—6, 505, 508, 510, 512, 517, 530, 531, 535, 537, 538.
 " Lt.-Gen. von der: 57.
 Gommiers: 410, 411, 420.
 Gondrecourt: 209.
 Gonesse: 271, 273.
 Gordon, Lieut.-Gen. von: 59.
 Gorgon: 538.
 Görsdorf: 83, 84, 89.
 Gorze: 133, 134, 136, 139, 144, 148, 154, 155, 159, 161.
 Gottberg, Col. von: 58, 628.
 Goujard's Division: 456.
 Goupillon: 129.
 Gournay: 339.
 Goury, Château: *v.* Château Goury.
 Government of National Defence: 546, 582.
 "Governments, General" (German), of France: 544—5. *Map of* 545.
 Goze, Gen.: 48.
 Graben: 67.
 Gramont, Duke of: 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 597, 599, 601, 605; quoted 20(n). *Portrait* 19.
 Grand-Bonvallet: *v.* Bonvalet.
 " Charmont: 517, 518.
 " Chatres: 431, 432, 433.
 " Fougeret, wood: 509.
 " Haye: 234.
 " Lucé: 452, 455, 457.
 " Lus: 395.
 " Pré: 103, 206, 217, 218, 220, 221, 222, 223, 250, 251, 253.
 " Rilly: 432, 437.
 " Seraucourt: 366, 368, 369, 370, 371.
 Grand Toupanne: 436, 439.
 Grande Couronne: 358, 359, 360.
 Grange-Dame: 514, 518, 521, 524.
 " d'Ancin: 510.
 " des Groues: 386.
 Granville, Earl: 596, 600, 604.
 Gratreuil: 222.
 Grauerort: 574.
 Gravelotte: 122, 132, 154, 156, 157, 159, 162, 163, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172. *Ravine near* 167.
 " Battle of: 154—60, 161 *sqq.*; Verdy du Vernois on 200(n). *Crown-Pr. Albert of Saxony at* 176; *39th Rifles at* 171; *Return of French after* 181.
 Graves, French, at Petit-Plessis: 289.
 Gray: 479, 483, 485, 488, 489, 491, 495, 500, 505, 506, 513, 526, 531.
 Grenest, quoted: 395(n).
 Grenier, Gen.: 48, 127, 165.
 Grenouilly, Adm. Rigault: 577.
 Gréville: 350, 351, 352, 353, 354.
 Grevy, M.: 260.
 Greyère, farm: 196.
 Gricourt: 373.
 Griesbach: 95, 96.
 Grigy: 124, 128, 129.
 "Grille", the: 574, 575, 576, 583, 586.
 Grimm, Herr: 625.
 " Prof. Hermann: 625.
 Gröben, Lieut.-Gen. von: 57, 339.
 " Gen. von der: 354, 365, 367, 370, 374.
 Grugies: 368, 369, 371, 372.
 Guards: *v.* Garde.
 Gué-de-l'Aune: 455.
 " -de-la-Hart: 455.
 Guelphs, the German: 12.
 Guerilla War in Central District: 554—6.
 " " in Northern District: 548—54.
 " " in Southern District: 556—66.
 Gueydon, Vice-Adm.: 585.
 Guilhem, Gen.: 258, 279.
 Guillonville: 411, 417.
 Guretzky, Lieut.-Col. von: 537.
 Guiscard: 331.
 Guise: 349, 355, 375.
 Gundershofen: 84, 92, 95, 96.
 Gunstett, 83, 85, 87, 88, 90.
 Gustedt, Herr von: 628.
 Gutleuthof: 77.
 Guyot de l'Espart, Gen.: 48.

H

- Haas, Lieut.: 460.
 Habonville: 163, 166, 167, 173, 174, 177, 178, 179, 181.
 Habsburgh: 3.
 Hachette: 268.
 Hagenau: 67, 72, 74, 75, 78, 79, 82, 84, 88, 89, 92.
 Hagenbach: 72.
 Hague, the: 9.
 Hahnke, Maj. von: 88, 628; quoted 232(n).

- Hallue, Battle of: 342—7, 357.
Map of 342.
 " Bridge: 346.
 " River: 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 363.
 Ham: 341, 364, 365, 367, 368, 370, 371.
 Hamburg: 415(n), 570.
 'Hamburger Nachrichten', quoted: 14(n), 15(n 1), 17.
 Hamelin-court: 357.
 Hammer, Herr: 637.
 Hancourt: 365, 367.
 Hann von Weiher, Gen.: v. Weiher.
 Hannonville-au-Passage: 159, 161, 203.
 Hanover: 26, 570.
 Hanseatic Towns: 26.
 Hapsburgh: v. Habsburgh.
 Haras, farm: 318, 320.
 Harbig, Grenadier: 287.
 Hardegg, Herr: 625.
 Harrach, Count: 312, 314, 628; *portrait of Moltke* 313.
 Hartmann, Gen. von: 58, 82—3, 88, 264, 267, 635, 636, 638; letter after battle of Wörth 105. *Portrait* 266.
 " Lieut.-Gen. von: 59.
 " Maj.-Gen. von: 59, 172, 267, 304.
 Harvey's torpedoes: 586.
 Hastings: 608.
 Hatzfeld, Count: 595, 594. *Portrait* 594.
 Haunconcourt: 188.
 Hausen, Col. von: 214.
 Hauses, Capt.: 561.
 Haute-Maison, Montry: 608.
 " Marne: 475.
 Hautes-Bruyères, Les: 279, 311.
 Hauteville: 492.
 Havana: 589, 591.
 Havelock, Mr.: 622.
 Havre: v. Le Havre.
 Haybes: 243.
 Hébecourt: 334, 337, 338, 357.
 Hédauville: 348.
 Heidelberg: 282 (and n).
 "Heil dir im Siegerkranz": 647.
 Heilmann, quoted: 268.
 Heinleth, Lieut.-Col. von: 58, 377(n), 380.
 Hela, peninsula: 583.
 Held, Col. von: 556.
 Helden Sarnowski, Col. von: 57, 309.
 Heldt, Rear-Adm.: 575.
 Heligoland: 574, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 584, 585, 591.
 Helmuth, Capt.: 228.
 Henkel von Donnersmark, Count: 620.
 Henning, Lieut.-Col. von: 344, 352.
 Henry II. of France: 7.
 " XI, of Pless: v. Pless.
 " General: 48.
 Hepp, sous-Préfet: 75.
 Herault: 403.
 Héricourt: 488, 512, 513, 514, 517, 518, 520, 523, 524. *View of* 517.
 "Hernan Cortez", the: 591.
 Herny: 134, 136, 193.
 "Hertha", the: 570, 581(n), 587, 588.
 Herwarth von Bittenfeld, Gen.: 59.
 Hertzberg, Col. von: 57.
 Herzog, Gen.: 538.
 Hesse: 49, 65, 98, 104, 612, 615.
 " Frederick of, Landgrave: 57.
 " Grand-Duke of: 600.
 " Louis of, Prince: 56, 57-8, 166.
 Hilschbach: 70.
 Hindersin, Gen. von: 56, 313.
 " artillery-officer: 635.
 Hirtsholm, island: 575.
 Hoffmann, Lieut.-Gen. von: 59.
 Hofmann, Capt.: 411 (and n).
 " rifleman: 214.
 Hohenlohe, Prince: 615.
 Hohenzollern: 3.
 " Karl Anton of: v. Karl.
 " Prince of: v. Frederick.
 Holderberg, Maj.-Gen. Nehrhoff von: 58.
 Holland, 8, 9, 611, 618, 621.
 Holnon: 370, 373.
 Homburg: 62.
 Honfleur: 340.
 Hontheim: 427.
 Horimont, mountain: 186, 187, 188, 190, 191.
 Horn, Baron von: 58.
 " Lieut. von: 230.
 Horta: 570, 587.
 Hortense, Queen, Monument of: 284.
 Hôtel de Ville, Paris: 260, 289.
 " des Réservoirs, Versailles: 630, 631.
 Houtaud: 533.
 Howitzer, the: 41.
 Hübner, Serg.: 287.
 Huêtre: 26, 385.
 Hügel, Gen. von: 251.
 Hugo, Victor: 632.
 Hugues, Gen. d': 265, 267, 310.
 Huisne, river: 400, 447, 451, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 462, 463.
 Huisseau-sur-Mauve: 392.
 Hüllessem, Lt.-Col. von: 129, 359. *Portrait* 128.
 Hungary: 3, 31, 597, 598.
 Hussar, Prussian: 50.
 Hymmen, Lieut.-Col. von: 369, 370, 371.

I

- Iges: 254.
 Ill, river: 466, 469, 472.
 Illkirch: 467.
 Illy, village: 248, 250, 251.
 " Calvaire d': v. Calvaire d'Illy.
 Indemnity, the War: 620.
 'Indépendant Rémois, L'', quoted: 607.
 Infantry of the Line, French, compared with German: 46. *Illustration of* 39.
 Infantry *Bavarian*: 55.
 " German: 53.
 " Prussian Light: v. Jäger.
 " *Württemberg*: 55.
 Ingré: 426.
 Iron Crosses: 28, 54, 214, 292, 648. *Illustration of* 26.
 Irisson, Count d'Herrison d': 617(n).
 Is-sur-Tille: 493, 526, 528, 564.
 Isabella, Queen (Spain): 13.
 Isle, d' (suburb of St. Quentin): 372.
 " -sur-Doubs: 488, 499, 500, 507.
 Isnard, Col.: 356, 363, 364, 365, 366, 368, 370.
 Isneauville: 339.
 Issy, fortress: 290, 311, 634.
 Italy: 3, 11, 13, 31, 36, 40, 41, 68, 120, 597, 599, 602, 606.
 Ivoye, Gen. P. d': 333, 334, 341, 360, 371.
 Jachmann, Adm.: 571, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 582, 584, 585, 586, 591. *Portrait* 576.
 Jade, river: 570, 574, 576, 577, 578, 579, 581, 584, 585, 586, 587.
 Jagemann, Col. von: 58.
 Jäger, Prussian: 53. *Illustration of* 50.
 " Herr (rifleman): 214.

J

- Jachmann, Adm.: 571, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 582, 584, 585, 586, 591. *Portrait* 576.
 Jade, river: 570, 574, 576, 577, 578, 579, 581, 584, 585, 586, 587.
 Jagemann, Col. von: 58.
 Jäger, Prussian: 53. *Illustration of* 50.
 " Herr (rifleman): 214.

- Jägerhaus, the : 298, 299, 301, 304.
 Jägerhof, the : 295, 302, 304.
 Jahde, Bay of the : 315 (and n).
 Jähns, Capt. Max : 624.
 Jamaica : 589.
 Jänisch, Colour-Sergeant : 284.
 Jansch, Capt. : 323.
 Janville : 396, 401.
 Janvry : 424, 426.
 Jardy : 318.
 Jargeau : 424.
 Jarny : 157, 161, 162, 163, 203.
View of 162.
 Jarras, Gen. : 47.
 Jarry-Basse : 403.
 Jars, island : 469, 472.
 Jasmund : 579.
 Jaucigny, Dubois de : 433, 434.
 Jaumont : 180.
 Jauréguiberry, Adm. : 395, 396, 410, 413, 415, 592. *Portrait* 411.
 Jaurès, Capt. : 399, 400.
 Jena, Battle of (1806) : 34(n), 37, 280.
 Jeandelize : 202.
 "Jeanne d'Arc", the : 583.
 Jaunet, Forêt de : 225.
 "Jerome Napoleon", the : 583.
 Jerusalem : 178.
 Joan of Arc : 7(n).
 Jobey's Brigade : 438.
 John of Saxony, King : *Portrait* 24.
 Joigny : 559, 561, 562, 563.
 Joinville : 294, 295, 304, 556 (and n).
 Jollivet, Col. : 111.
 Jolly, Herr : 625, 631.
 Josephine, Empress, Monument of : 284.
 Josnes : 440.
 Jouaville : 187.
 Jouffroy, Gen. 448, 450, 455.
 "Jour Napoléon" : 102, 133 (and n).
 Jouy : 264, 433.
 Jumelles, wood : 477.
 Jungé, Col. : 59.
 Jura, Department of : 544, 618.
 " Mountains : 529, 531, 532, 535, 538.
 Juranville : 403, 404, 407.
 Jussy : 171, 183, 365, 367, 369, 479.
 Jutland : 570.
 Juvisy : 556.

K

- Kahlden, Col. von : 550.
 Kaisenberg, Maj. von : 79.
 Kaiserslauten : 71.
 Kameke, Gen. von : 57, 108, 110, 111, 112, 113, 326(n), 635, 642.
Portrait 325.
 Kaminski, Maj.-Gen. : v. Stein v. Kaminski.
 Kanitz, Count von : 287, 288, 308.
 "Kapitulant" : 52 (and n 2).
 Kapsweyer : 76.
 Karl Anton of Hohenzollern, Prince : 14—5, 17, 21, 22, 34(n). *Portrait* 11.
 " of Roumania : v. Charles.
 " of Württemberg, King : *Portrait* 32.
 " Wilhelm of Thuringia : 65.
Portrait 64.
 Karlsruhe : 30, 67, 68, 98, 629.
 Karnatz, Maj. : 628, 641.
 Katsbach, Battle of [1813] : 94 (and n 2), 186 (and n).
 Kauffungen, Lieut. von : 320.
 Kehl : 28, 65, 467.
 " *Destruction of Bridge at* 28; *Siege-battery before* 468; *Street in*, 468.
 Keller, Gen. : 378, 480, 481, 482, 487, 493, 494, 500, 517, 521, 522, 523, 524.
 " Mons. : 618.
 Kessel, Gen. von : 178.
 Kettler, Gen. von : 526, 527, 528, 529, 539, 564.
 Keudell, Councillor von : 595, 628. *Portrait* 594.
 Key West : 589.
 Kiel : 568, 571, 572, 575, 578, 579, 582, 583, 585, 586, 587.
 Kirchbach, Gen. von : 58, 78, 79, 87, 88, 89, 92, 94, 264, 318, 323. *Portrait* 77.
 Kirchhoff, Lieut. : 243.
 Kjøge Bay : 578, 582, 584.
 Kleist, Lieut.-Gen. von : 56.
 Klocke, Maj. von : 210.
 Knappe, von : 517.
 Knappstaedt, Col. von : 174.
 Knešebreck, Col. von : 530, 531, 539.
 Knights of Malta : 73.
 " of St. John : 30—1, 60, 73.
 Knorr, Capt.-Lieut. : 588—91, *Portrait* 588.
 Köhler, Lt.-Col. : 58.
 Kolberg : 582, 583, 584.
 Köller, President von : 640.
 Köllerthal, wood : 109.
 "König Wilhelm", the : 568, 569, 579, 587.
 Königgrätz, Battle of [1866] : 4, 6, 8 (and n), 13 (and n), 31, 42, 51, 52, 55, 56, 132, 264, 603, 616, 649 (n 2).
 Königshofen : 465, 466, 469, 472, 473.
 Köppen, Fedor von : 628.
 Körber, Maj. von : 138, 141, 440.
 Kottbus : 550, 554.
 Kottwitz, Baron von : 416. *Portrait* 416.
 Kraatz-Koschlau, Gen. von : 58, 135, 148, 422, 448, 461, 463.
 Kraus, Lieut.-Col. : 520.
 Krause, Maj. : 634.
 Kriess, Capt. : 565.
 " Maj. von : 386.
 Krohn, Col. von : 553.
 Kronenburg : 465, 466, 469.
 "Kronprinz", the : 568.
 Krug von Nidda, Maj.-Gen. 233.
Krupp gun for coast defence : 571.
 Kummer, Gen. von : 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 194, 195, 196, 345, 351, 352, 353, 365, 368, 370, 373, 375. *Portrait* 189.

L

- La Barre : 531.
 " Berchère, farm : 497, 498.
 " *View of* 498.
 " Bergerie : 318, 320, 323.
 " Bésace : 207, 230.
 " Borde : 385.
 " Bouille : 358, 359.
 " Bourgonce : 475—8. *Map* 476.
 La Bourie, and farm : 431.
 " Bretonnière : 405, 406.
 " Bruère : 430.
 " Butte : 453.
 " Chapelle : 245, 426, 538.
 " Chaux : v. Chaux.
 " Cluse : 538.
 " Croix-Briquet : 383, 422, 423.
 La Fauconière, farm : 415.
 " Fère, fortress : 306, 329, 339(n), 341, 357, 358, 368, 370, 550.
 " Ferté : 387, 428, 447, 451, 452, 550.
 " Folie : 165, 177.
 " Fouilleuse : 318, 319, 321, 323.
 " Fourche : 450.

- La Garenne: *v.* Bois de Garenne.
 „ Guayara: 588.
 „ Hitte System, the: 45.
 „ Houssière: 478.
 „ Jonchère: 283, 284, 318, 322.
 „ Londe: 359.
 „ Loupe: 399.
 „ Maladerie: 410, 412, 414, 420.
 „ Moncelle: 208, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 251.
 „ Motte: 344, 392.
 „ Pêcherie: 476.
 „ Petite Moncelle: 232.
 „ Planchette: 127.
 „ Provenchère: 420, 423, 426, 475.
 „ Ranchette: 125.
 „ Renardière: 392, 393, 394, 395.
 „ Rivière: 393.
 „ Roche: 562.
 „ Roche-Starkenfels, Maj.-Gen. von: 59.
 „ Roncière Le Noury, Vice-Adm.: 292, 577.
 „ Roquette: 358.
 „ Rue-Boussier: 404, 405.
 „ Rulle: 243, 245.
 „ Salle: 477.
 „ Souche: 425.
 „ Tête-Noire: 384, 385.
 „ Touane Château: 393.
 „ Tour: 422.
 „ Vacheresse: 564.
 „ Vilette: 439.
 „ Voivre: 475.
 „ Vrigne: 537.
 Lacratelle, Gen.: 242, 251.
 Ladmiraute, Gen. de: 48, 124, 127, 159, 165. *Portrait* 166.
 Ladon: 401, 402.
 Ladonchamps: 195, 196.
 Lafont de Villiers, Gen.: 48.
 Lagny: 291, 636.
 Lagrange: 346, 370.
 Lailly: 432.
 Lajaille. Col. 48.
 Lamarche: 483, 563 (and n), 564.
 Lamécourt: 241.
 Lampertheim: 467.
 Lampertsloch: 89.
 Lamotte: 343.
 Lamouilly: 215.
 Lancer: *v.* Uhlan.
 Landau: 62, 65, 67, 72, 76, 78, 98.
 „ Saarlouis: 600, 608.
 Ladrée, the: 494.
 Landwehr, the: 40, 50, 52 (and n 3), 53, 54. *Illustrations of* 50, 514.
 Langensulzbach: 84, 87, 89, 90.
 „ Forest of: 83.
 Langlochère: 430, 431, 432, 434.
 Langlütjensand: 582.
 Langres: 203, 479, 483, 485, 489, 495, 500, 505, 507, 526, 529, 557, 560, 561.
 „ Fortress of: 559, 564, 565.
 Lantenay: 493.
 „Lanterne, La: 11.
 Laon: 259, 550, 551, 631.
 Lapasset: 139, 159, 168.
 Laquenexy: 125, 126, 184, 188.
 Laroche, Gen. von: 466.
 Lartigne, Gen. de: 48, 242, 251.
 Lasker, Herr: 614.
 Lauer, Surg.-Gen. von: 627.
 Launay: 432, 436, 439.
 Launois: 552, 553.
 Lauter, river: 73, 74, 76, 77.
 Lauterburg: 63, 76.
 Lauvallier: 126, 128, 129.
 Lauzin, river: 510.
 Laval: 464.
 Lavallo, Dr.: 483.
 Laveaucoupet, Gen. de: 48, 109, 117.
 Layes: 433, 434, 436, 437, 439.
 L'Encornes: 423.
 L'Envie, farm: 165.
 L'Epau: 462.
 L'E pine-de-Dallon: 370, 373.
 L'Estocq Col. von: 117, 140.
 L'Isle: 527, 530, 531.
 L'Hay: 278, 279.
 L'Hermite: 583.
 Le Bardou: 431.
 „ Bassor Sorval, Gen.: 48.
 „ Blanc Mesnil: 286, 307, 308, 309.
 „ Bœuf, Marshal: 18, 25, 41, 42, 47, 74, 159, 203. *Portrait* 21.
 „ Bourget: 277, 284, 307, 315, 316, 632. *View of* 285, Battle of: 285—8, 307—9, 310. *Sketch of* 286.
 „ Breil: 452.
 „ Brun (architect): 637.
 „ Cateau: 372, 374, 375.
 „ Catelet: 349, 375.
 „ Chène: 460.
 „ Chesne: 218, 223, 224.
 „ Chesny: 220.
 „ Fays: 226.
 „ Han: 476.
 „ Havre: 340, 341, 358, 360.
 „ Noury, Vice-Adm.: *v.* La Roncière.
 „ Mans: 324, 384, 391, 398, 399, 400, 428, 443, 445, 447, 448, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 461, 462, 463, 464, 534, 556, 562. *Map of* 449; *Retreat near* 464.
 „ Mée: 431, 432, 433, 434, 436.
 „ Perche: 396—401, 407, 420, 428, 503, 504, 539, 540. *Map of* 441.
 „ Petit Sougis: 384, 386.
 „ Plant: 295, 301.
 „ Plessis: 439.
 „ Pontchu: 370.
 „ Quesnel: 333.
 „ Sansonnet: 185.
 Le Transloy: 351.
 Lebach: 70.
 Lebrun, Gen.: 47, 204, 227, 242.
 Lecointe, Gen.: 332, 336, 337, 346, 374.
 Ledebour, Capt. von: 472.
 Legat Col. von: 359.
 Legrand, Gen.: 48, 151.
 Lehaucourt, quoted: 395(n), 443—4.
 Lehmann, Col.: 138, 145.
 „ Maj.: 558, 559.
 Lehnndorff, Count: 201(n), 627.
 Leipzig: 157, 159, 162, 168, 173.
 „ Battle of [1813]: 20 (and n), 65 (and n), 94 (and n 3).
 Lembach: 81, 83, 87, 96.
 Lempire: 366, 367, 368, 375.
 Lencke, Capt.: 628, 641.
 Leopold of Bavaria, Prince: 56, 411. *At Villepion* 412.
 „ of Hohenzollern, Prince: 13, 14, 15, 16, 32, 627, 631. *Portrait* 12.
 Les Aides: 386.
 „ Aubrays: 384, 386, 425.
 „ Baraques: 137.
 „ Barres: 384, 385, 426.
 „ Broses: 455.
 „ Cotelles: 403, 404.
 „ Crottes, quarries: 395, 421.
 „ Etangs: 125.
 „ Feignes: 476.
 „ Fermes: 463.
 „ Forges: 339, 478.
 „ Francs: 423.
 „ Gars: 456.
 „ Groilles: 437, 439.
 „ Mortes-Aures: 461.
 „ Planches: 533, 534, 535, 536.
 „ Roches: 404, 406.
 „ Saizerains: 136.
 „ Tapes, farms: 196.
 „ Tuileries: *v.* Tuileries.
 Lespart, Gen.: 95, 96, 222.
 Leszczynski, Lieut.-Col. von: 50, 466, 467, 474, 514. *Portrait* 467.
 Léthane: 224, 226, 227, 229.
 Leuglay: 564.
 Leuthen, Battle of [1757]: 407.
 Levant, the: 570.
 Levier: 522, 534, 535, 536, 538.
 Levrecey: 507.
 Lichtenberg: 98, 99. *View of* 100.
 Licourt: 365.
 Liebert, Gen.: 48, 82.
 Liebknecht, Herr: 648 (and n).
 Ligny: 102, 353, 354, 375.
 „ Battle of: 96.
 Lille, Capt.: 553.
 Lille: 331, 332, 375.
 Limoges: 438.
 Linay: 234.
 Linck, Lieut.-Col. von: 93.
 Line of Communications, On the: 624.
 „Linois”, the: 587, 588.
 Lipowski: 408.

- Lippe, Count zur: 58, 233, 339, 372.
 Lisaine, river: 464, 508, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 519, 520, 522, 523, 527, 539.
 " Battle on the: 516 *sqq.*
 " Map of 508.
 " March to the: 509.
 " Illustration of 508.
 Lisbon: 587.
 Livonius, Commander: 576.
 Lobia: 565.
 Lobsann: 89.
 Loën, Lieut.-Gen. von: 59, 466.
 Loigny: 382, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 420, 423, 445. *Farm at 414; View of 408.*
 " Battle of: 407-18. *Map of 409; Repulse of French at 418.*
 Loing, river: 389, 401.
 Loire, river: 295, 305, 315, 328, 378, 379, 384, 385, 389, 390, 396(n), 397, 398, 399 (and n), 424, 429, 430, 432, 434, 438, 440, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 449, 450, 452, 499, 500, 556, 561, 611.
 Lombron: 457, 460, 463.
 Lombut: 234.
 Lomont: 513, 527, 530, 532.
 London: 216, 332, 605, 606.
 Long Cour: 403, 404.
 Longchamp: 642, 643.
 Longchamps: 326.
 Longeau: 495.
 Longeville: 510, 512.
 Longeville: 185.
 Longjumeau: 263, 277, 291, 378.
 Lons-le-Saunier: 499, 529.
 Longueau: 335, 337, 338.
 Longwy, fortress: 548, 549.
 Lorcy: 403, 404.
 Lorencez, Gen.: 48, 127, 165.
 Lorges: 433, 439.
 Lorraine: 331, 485, 495, 507, 563, 618, 620, 648.
 " "General Govern-ment" of: 544.
 Losheim: 71, 108.
 Lössl, Capt.: 265, 268.
 Loucadou, von: 627.
 Loue, river: 529, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535.
 Louis XIV: 2, 5, 7, 65, 292, 317, 608, 616(n), 631, 637.
 " Statue of: 627.
 " of Bavaria (II): 29-30, 600, 611, 612, 614, 650; quoted 594-5. *Portrait 29.*
 " of Hesse, v. Hesse.
 " Philippe: 36, 37, 595.
 Louise, Queen (Germany): 27 (and n), 28, 627 (and n).
 Loury: 421, 423, 424.
 Louvre, the, Paris: 289.
 Löwenfeld, Lieut.-Gen. von: 59.
 Lübeck: 415(n).
 Luce, river: 333, 334, 336, 337.
 Ludwig: v. Louis.
 Luitpold of Bavaria, Prince: 56, 614, 627, 648. *Portrait 615.*
 Lumeau: 413, 415, 416, 418, 420, 421.
 Lumes: 251.
 Lune d'Anvours: v. Anvours.
 Lüneschoss, Maj.: 387.
 Lüneville: 100, 102, 474, 478, 479, 560, 564.
 Lure: 478, 479, 480, 489, 500, 510, 512, 513, 525.
 Lutz, von: 612.
 Lützelstein: 98, 99.
 Luvigny: 121.
 Luxemburg: 8, 9, 17, 548, 570, 600, 601, 618.
 Luxeuil: 479.
 Luze, river: 513, 517, 518, 523, 524.
 Lynar, Col.: 452, 453.
 Lyncker, Col. von: 135, 138, 140.
 Lyon: 48, 482, 487, 490, 491, 499, 505, 530.
 Lyons-la-Forêt: 339.
 " Lord: 608.

M

- Maas (Meuse), river: 102, 133, 134, 135, 142, 143, 159, 186, 207, 208 (and n), 209, 210, 211, 215, 218, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 235, 238, 239, 241, 246, 250, 251, 252.
 MacMahon, Marshal: 41-2, 47, 74, 81, 82, 84, 89, 101, 122, 158, 182, 185, 186, 192, 203, 204, 205, 206, 208, 209, 210, 212, 213, 215, 216, 217, 220, 223, 229, 234, 238, 251. *Portrait 82.*
 Madeleine: 426.
 Madrid: 17, 18, v. also Spain.
 Magenta: 131.
 " Battle of: 42.
 " Duke of: 47.
 Maiche: 535, 537.
 Mailley: 506.
 Maine, river: 20, 23, 611, 636 (and n).
 Maintz: v. Mayence.
 Maire, Gen.: 93.
 Mairy: 233, 244.
 Maison Brulée: 359.
 " Rouge: 247.
 Maizières: 190, 196, 401, 402, 407.
 Malabry: 263, 267.
 Malain: 491.
 Malakoff (Crimea): 41.
 Malancourt: 187, 189, 190.
 Malesherbe: 378.
 Malmaison: 156, 168, 171, 283, 284, 294, 301, 318, 321.
 " Battle of: 283-5.
 Malroy: 188.
 " Gen.: 295.
 Mance: 164, 168, 170, 171, 172.
 Mandrevillars: 519, 521, 523.
 Manèque, Gen.: 48.
 Mangiennes: 186, 218.
 Mannheim: 98.
 Manois: 203.
 Manteuffel, Gen. von: 59, 123, 125, 162, 187, 188, 189, 190, 328-9, 331, 333, 334, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 343, 344, 346, 347, 348, 349, 357, 358, 359 (and n), 360, 507, 514, 516, 525, 526, 529, 531, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 564, 617(n), 634, 645, 648. *Portrait 329.*
 Mantoche: 483.
 Manstein, Capt. von: 504.
 " Gen. von: 159, 161, 164, 165, 176, 180, 189, 426. *Portrait 165.*
 Manzoni: 224.
 Marast: 510.
 Marat: 510.
 Marbach: 136.
 Marceaux: 506.
 Marcelcave: 335, 336, 338.
 Marchenoir: 389, 391, 399, 400, 420, 428, 430, 431, 432.
 Marcilly: 403, 555 (and n), 556.
 Marcoing: 375.
 Margueritte, Gen.: 204, 234, 249. *Portrait 249.*
 Marie-aux Chênes: 164.
 Marienburg: 77.
 Mariouse, Gen. de la: 303.
 Markelsheim: 82.
 Marly: 318. *King William on the Aqueduct of 273.*
 Marne, river and Dept.: 102, 203, 210, 263, 272, 291, 293, 294, 295, 297, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 309, 480, 526, 529, 531, 535, 554, 556, 636 v. also Haute Marne.
 Marnay: 506.
 Marolles: 432.
 Mars-la-Tour: 122, 134, 135, 136, 137, 139, 157, 158, 159, 161, 203. *Cavalry Combat at 152, View of the Ulzon Valley 149.*

- Mars la-Tour : Battle of : 149—52.
 Marsal : 102.
 "Marseillaise", 25, 64, 260, 578, 595, 624.
 Marseille : 340.
 Marsilly : 126.
 Martin de Pallière : 424.
 Martineau, Gen. : 426.
 Martinique : 588, 591.
 Martroi Square, Orleans : 387.
 Massow, Col. von : 367.
 Matigny : 367.
 Mattat, Gen. : 300, 303, 304, 305.
 Mattstall : 83.
 Maud'huy, Gen. : 277.
 Maussion, Gen. : 268, 295, 297, 299, 300, 303, 305.
 Mauve, river : 392, 430.
 Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico : 16.
 Maxse, Col. : 580.
 Mayence : 62, 66, 67, 69, 71, 76, 112, 646.
 Mayenne, river : 464.
 Mayer, Maj. von : 413.
 Mazange : 450.
 Meaux : 271, 554, 555, 623.
 Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Grand-Duke of : 56, 59, 190, 192 (n 2), 291, 396—401, 420, 421, 423, 445, 447, 450, 451, 452, 456, 457, 462, 463, 464, 636, 648. *Portrait* 397.
 " Paul of : 57.
 " William, Duke of :
 v. William.
 Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Grand-Duke of : 56, 630, 631.
 Medal for the German Generals : 643, 652.
 "Medusa", the : 570, 581(n), 587, 588.
 Mée : v. Le Mée.
 Meerscheid-Hüllessem v. Hüllessem.
 Meiningen, Duke of : 627.
 " Prince : 631.
 Melun : 263, 378, 548.
 Memel : 571 (and n), 583.
 Memerty, Gen. von : 357, 363, 365, 367.
 Memorial at Bois-de-la-Cusse : 181.
 Memorials, Bavarian : 96.
 " German : 97.
 Mer : 389, 390, 434, 438.
 Merale, farm : 414, 415.
 Mercy-le-haut : 195.
 Merdereau, brook : 463.
 Mertens, Gen. von : 467, 500.
 Mésandans : 530.
 Meslay : 444.
 Mésnil : v. Le Blanc Mésnil.
 Messas : 391, 392, 434, 435, 436.
 Messigny : 529.
 "Meteor", the : 570, 581(n), 588, 589, 590, 591.
 Metman, Gen. : 48, 168 (and n).
 Metternich, Prince : 4, 598; quoted 598.
 Metz : 7(n), 33, 49, 67, 68, 71, 74, 81, 102, 120, 122, 123, 124, 125, 127, 128, 131, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 140, 141, 143, 144, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 168, 170, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 198, 199, 202, 204, 205, 207, 208, 209, 210, 212, 215, 216, 218, 220, 235, 257, 285, 328, 329, 331, 332, 475, 489, 548, 549, 601, 608, 618, 620.
Battle-fields round 156;
Map of Route to 121;
Neighbourhood of 619;
Valley of Moselle near 186.
 " Investment and Fall of : 182—201. *Blockade of* 184;
Night-march of French thro' 134; *Surrender of* 197; *Uhlan-Vedette before* 191.
 Meudon : 263, 266, 280, 312. *View of* 270.
 " Castle of : 314, 639.
 Meung : 430, 431, 438.
 Meurthe, river : 475, 476, 477, 478.
 Meuse, river : v. Maas.
 Meuzin, brook : 497, 498.
 Mexico : 6, 16, 40, 42, 69, 186, 194.
 Mey : 125, 126, 127, 128, 129.
 Mézières : 205, 209, 221, 222, 230, 231, 234, 235, 238, 239, 241, 247, 258, 259, 264, 323, 329, 331, 507, 548, 550, 551, 553.
 Michel, Gen. : 91, 410, 489, 490, 491.
 Michelet : 111, 366, 370, 371, 373, 374.
 Michler, Lieut. : 284.
 Millot : 533, 536.
 Miltitz, Col. von : 233.
 Mirande : 486, 539.
 Miraumont : 350, 351, 354, 356.
 Mirebeau : 479, 484, 485, 488, 491.
 Mirécourt : 478, 560, 564.
 Mirus, Gen. von : 354.
 Mischke, Maj. : 628, 629.
 Mitrailleur, the : 46. *Illustrations of* 46, 47.
 Mitry : 263.
 Mitternacht, von : 612, 631. *Portrait* 612.
 Mixéville : 218.
 Mobilisation of the German Army : 61—6.
 Moffans : 513.
 Moimay : 510.
 Molette, brook : 286, 309.
 Moltke, Adolf : 32.
 " Gen. von : 5, 9, 10, 13, 15, 17, 32—3 (and n), 34, 55, 56, 122, 156, 162, 171, 172 (and n), 174, 182, 200(n), 210, 223, 232, 238, 253, 254, 263(n), 273, 307, 312—4, 340, 364, 384, 500, 553, 571, 593, 618, 623, 628, 630, 632, 633, 639, 640, 648; quoted 32—3(n), 175(n), 633. *Portraits* 6, 274, 313.
His Residence in Versailles 633.
 Moncelle : v. La Moncelle.
 Moncornet : 551.
 "Moniteur, Le, quoted : 20.
 Mont Avron : 293, 294, 299, 303, 306, 310, 323.
 " de-Brune : 227, 228, 229.
 " Cheutin : 218.
 " Chevis, farm : 517, 518, 521.
 " Dannin : 517.
 " Doubleau : 400.
 " St. Blaise : 195.
 " Valérien : 270, 271, 282, 283, 284, 311, 314, 316, 318, 319, 320, 324, 632, 639. *View of* 270; *After its capture* 322.
 " " Battle of : 317—23.
 " Vaudois : 513, 514, 517, 518, 519.
 Montargis : 401, 504, 505, 507, 556, 563.
 Montaudon, Gen. : 48, 109, 120, 148, 168.
 Montbard : 499, 500, 507, 527, 557.
 Montbéliard : 488, 504, 506, 513, 514, 517, 518, 521, 523, 524, 525, 535. *Castle of* 516.
 Montbozon : 481, 500, 506, 508, 509, 530.
 "Montcalm", the : 579, 587.
 Montcley : 482.
 Montdidier : 331, 333.
 Montreau : 554, 556.
 Montfaucon : 218.
 Montfort : 456, 457, 463.
 Monthois : 221.
 Montigny : 162, 164, 165, 185, 345, 346, 437, 525.
 Montimont : 247.
 Monthéry : 263, 379.
 Montlivant : 438.
 Montmagny : 269.
 Montmartre : 270, 271.
 Montmédy : 205, 206, 207, 213, 219, 221, 328, 548, 549.
 Montmirail : 548, 555.
 Montmorency, Duc de [1552] : 199(n).
 Montoire : 447, 450, 451.
 Montois-la-Montagne : 175, 179, 222.
 Montoy : 124, 126, 127, 128, 188, 189.
 Montpellier, Troops of : 41.
 Montpipeau : 394.
 Montretout : 283, 318, 320, 321.
 Montrond : 534.
 Montrouge, fort : 267, 280, 281, 282, 290, 311.
 Montry : 608.

- Montsouris: 433.
 Morale: 419, 422.
 Morand, Gen.: 379, 381, 382, 415, 416, 418, 438.
 Moray: 527.
 Morée: 389, 391, 444, 447, 451.
 Morel: 222.
 Moreuil: 333, 338.
 Morre: 533.
 Morsbronn: 84, 88, 90, 91, 92.
 Mortagne, river: 478.
 Morteau: 532, 535, 537.
 Mortes-Aures. Les: 461.
 Mortier, fort: 487.
 Mory: 350, 351, 353.
 Moscou, farm: 157, 162, 167, 168, 169, 183. *View of* 173.
 Moscow: 2.
- Moselle, river: 62, 67, 102, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 144, 150, 159, 168, 170, 171, 180, 183, 184, 185, 187, 188, 190, 191, 192, 195, 196, 477, 478, 563. *Valley of the* 186.
 " fort: 185.
 Motterouge, Gen de: 379, 383, 384, 389.
 Mouchard: 527, 529, 531, 532.
 "Mougnot", the: 518, 523, 597.
 Moulac, Gen.: 346, 350.
 Moulin-d'Auvillers: 422.
 " -des-Gibets: 283.
 Moulins: 232.
 Moulineaux: 359.
- Mounted Rifleman, French: 39.
 Mourgelons, the: 212.
 Mouthe: 529, 533, 534, 536, 537.
 Mouzon: 207, 208, 223, 224, 226, 227, 228, 229, 232, 234, 235, 549. *Return of the French from* 228.
 Moy: 365, 366.
 Muck, Lieut.-Col.: 392.
 Mühlhausen: 82, 89, 471.
 Mulsanne: 458, 461, 463.
 Mulzer, Maj.-Gen. Baron von: 58.
 Mundolsheim: 467.
 Munich: 29, 30, 68, 77, 612, 613, 615, 650.
 Murat: 138.
 Murville: 423.
 Mutius, von: 628.
 Mutzig: 475.
- N
- Naclod, Battle of [1866]: 56 (n 3).
 Nagasaki: 587.
 Nancy: 49, 100, 102, 123, 203, 554, 556, 563, 564, 624, 644.
 Nangis: 554.
 Nanterre: 283, 318, 319.
 Nanteuil: 474, 636.
 " Tunnel at: 290.
 Napoleon I: 2, 4, 5, 7, 35, 43, 96, 282, 284, 627; quoted 82.
 " III: 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 15, 17, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 31, 32, 33, 36, 39, 40, 41, 46, 47, 69, 71, 120, 122-3, 137, 185, 192, 205, 207, 208, 234, 252, 254, 255, 282, 577, 590, 599, 602, 603, 608. *Portraits* 5, 376; *Napoleon and his Generals* 48; *Interview with Bismarck at Donchery* 254; *Napoleon's Letter delivered to William* 254.
 " Prince: 205, 602.
 " Prince Imperial: v. Prince Imperial
 Narais, brook: 451, 452, 453, 454, 455.
 Narcisse, Col.: 386, 387.
 Nassau: 104.
 National Guards: v. Garde.
 Natzmer, Maj. von: 405, 456.
 Naval Officers, French: 585.
 " German: 584.
 Navy, the German: 60.
 " v. also Fleet.
- Nayral: 168.
 Needle-gun, French: 45. *Illustration of* 45.
 " German: 54.
 Nehrhoff von Holderberg: v. Holderberg.
 Nehweiler: 84, 89.
 Nemours: 556, 558, 559.
 Nesle: 365.
 Neubreisach: 471, 474, 485, 487-8, 500.
 Neuchâtel: 339.
 Neuenburg: 487.
 Neufahrwasser: 583.
 Neufchâteau: 203(n), 478, 564.
 Neuilly: 271, 294, 300, 301, 303, 325(n), 641.
 " Battle of: 329.
 Neumeister, Capt.: 457.
 Neunkirchen: 62, 71, 112, 113, 114.
 Neustadt: 67.
 Neuville-les-la-Charité: 480, 500.
 Neuville-aux-Bois: 413, 421, 422, 426.
 " 343.
 Nevers: 379, 489, 490, 500, 505.
 Ney, Marshal: 65(n).
 Nibelle: 423.
 Nicarbon: 432.
 Nied, river: 122, 123, 125.
 Niederbronn: 84, 94, 95, 96, 105.
 Niederwald: 84, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92.
 Niel, Marshal: 8, 10, 42-3 (and n), 46.
 Nisib, Battle of: 56.
 Nivelles: 410.
 Nods: 537.
 Nogent: 293, 300, 303, 554, 556.
 " l'Artaud: 625.
 " le-Roi: 560.
- Nogent le-Rotrou: 399, 400, 448, 451.
 Noisseville: 124, 125, 128, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 196, 257.
 " Battle of: 329.
 Noisy-le-grand: 203, 294, 295, 298, 299, 300, 301, 303.
 " le-Sec: 310.
 Noméry: 120.
 Nompatelize: 475, 476.
 Nonneville: 411, 412, 417.
 Nordeck, Gen. Coffinières de: 199.
 Norges, brook: 485.
 Normandy: 331, 339, 347, 396(n). *Troops of* 41.
 Noroy-le-Bourg: 508, 510, 526.
 North German Confederation ("Bund"): 8, 10, 38, 49.
 Norway: 410.
 Nôtre-Dame-de-la-Pitié: 511.
 Nouart: 207, 219, 222, 223.
 Nouilly: 125, 126, 128, 129, 189.
 Novion: 250, 251.
 Novéant: 134, 138, 139.
 Novions-Porcien: 259.
 Noye, river: 334, 337, 341.
 Noyelles, Pont: v. Pont Noyelles.
 Noyers: 459, 462, 500, 525.
 Nozeroy: 534, 536, 537.
 Nuits: 491, 493, 494, 495, 500, 507. *Map of* 497; *Assault on the Railway Station* 498; *View of* 496.
 " Battle of: 496-500.
 " sous-Ravières: 556, 561, 562, 563.
 Nurlu: 349, 355, 364.
 Nussberg: 70.
 "Nymphe", the: 571, 575, 583, 584, 586.

O

Oberbronn: 95, 96.
 Obernitz, Gen. von: 58, 251, 298, 301. *Portrait* 301.
 Oberotterbach: 76.
 Obstfelder, Capt. von: 288.
 Ochse: 208, 218, 223, 230.
 Oestre: 370, 373.
 Oettingen: 109.
 Ognon, river: 478, 480, 484, 485, 499, 500, 503, 505, 506, 508, 509, 512, 513, 526, 527, 530, 531, 532, 534.
 „ Engagements at the: 480—3. *Map of* 481.
 Oise, river: 331, 332, 336, 337.
 Oiselay: 480, 481.
 Oldenburg: 570(n).
 „ Grand-Duke of: 627.
 Ollivier, M.: 11—2, 13, 17, 18, 20, 22, 24, 25, 601. *Portrait* 10.
 „ Ombrages Les", villa: 628. *View of* 629.
 Onans: 504, 509.
 Onville: 137, 139, 140.

Oppeln-Bronikowski, Col. von: 58.
 Oran: 579.
 Orff, Gen. von: 93, 394, 395, 396, 414, 415, 437. *Portrait* 395.
 Orgeans: 535.
 Orgères: 401, 408 (and n), 411, 412, 413, 414, 417, 420, 423.
 Oricourt: 512.
 Origin of the War: 1—34.
 Origny: 436, 439, 440.
 Orival: 359.
 Orleans: 307, 333, 377, 378, 379, 401, 402, 408, 410(n), 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 429, 438, 439, 444, 445, 446, 447, 556, 557, 559, 563, 591, 636, 642. *Map of* 382.
 „ Forest of: 407, 410, 423.
 „ Entry of the Germans into Orleans 427; *Tower of the Maid of*, 358.
 Only: 625, 626.

Ormes: 384, 385, 386, 392, 394, 403, 406, 426.
 Ormesson: 302.
 Ormeteau: 392, 394.
 Ormain: 209, 210.
 Ormans: 529, 533, 534, 535.
 Orne, river: 158, 159, 161, 164, 175, 179, 203.
 Osmont, Gen.: 48.
 Osten-Sacken, Gen. von der: 126.
 Othe, forest: 558.
 Otterbach, river: 72.
 Otto of Bavaria, Prince: 641.
 Ottweiler: 71.
 Ouche, river: 491, 492, 493, 539.
 Oulchy-le-Château: 275, 276.
 Ourcelle: 433, 436, 439.
 Ourcq Canal, the: 272.
 Ouvans: 382.
 Ouzouer-le-Marché: 391, 393, 430, 431.
 „ -sur-Loire: 378.

P

Pacy-sur-Eure: 399.
 Pagni: 134.
 Pagny: 123.
 Paladines, M.: v. D'Aurelle.
 Palaiseau: 264.
 Palatinate, the: 104.
 Palikao, Gen. de: 205, 251, 259, 260, 601. *Portrait* 206.
 Pallières, Gen. de: 392, 394, 396, 410.
 Panne: 401.
 Panthéon, the: 270.
 Pape, Gen. von: 57, 174, 178, 179, 269, 327. *Portrait* 178.
 Pappenheim, Lieut.-Col. von: 58.
 Parance, brook: 458, 463.
 Parfondrupt: 159.
 Parigné-l'Évêque: 451, 452, 453, 455, 456, 458, 461, 463.
 Paris: 2, 10, 64, 101, 102, 192, 203, 204, 205, 206, 209, 210, 212, 216, 235, 256, 363, 364, 376, 377, 378, 384, 385, 386, 389, 398, 401, 445, 452, 475, 504, 505, 507, 548, 550, 551, 554, 555, 597, 603, 608, 609, 610, 611, 620. *Maps of* 262, 277, 311, 320, 547; *On the Way to Paris* 622; *Arrival of Bavarians before* 268.
 „ Democracy: 212(n).
 „ Fall of: 323—7.
 „ Investment of: 261—72.
 „ Retreat of French upon: 258—9.

Paris: Siege of: 272—323.
 „ Treaty of [1856]: 596, 606.
 „ v. also Arc de Triomphe, Tuileries
 Particularists, the German: 12.
 Pasques: 492, 493.
 Passavant: 215, 530, 533.
 Patay: 408(n), 409, 412, 413, 420, 423, 424, 427.
 Paul of Mecklenburg-Schwerin: v. Mecklenburg.
 Pauly's Brigade: 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 373, 374.
 Pavé: 214.
 „ Blanc: 265, 266.
 Payen: 346, 350, 351, 353, 354, 365, 366, 367, 370.
 Péschot: 180.
 Peile, river: 32.
 Pélissier, Gen.: 492, 495, 496, 526, 635.
 Pellé, Gen.: 78, 82, 83.
 Peltre: 128.
 Penhoat, Vice-Adm.: 585.
 Péravy: v. St. Péravy.
 Perche, the: v. Le Perche.
 Perigne: 499.
 Péronne: 333, 348, 349, 351, 353, 355, 356, 357, 358, 360, 363, 364, 367.
 „ Fall of: 355—8.
 Pérouse: 482, 501, 539.
 Perponcher Count: 627.
 Pesmes: 484, 489, 491, 499, 506, 526, 530.
 Pestel, Col. von: 70, 106.
 Petit-Bicêtre: 263, 265.

Petit-Plessis, French Graves at: 289.
 Petite-Forêt, farm: 224.
 Petersbach: 100.
 Peytavin, Gen.: 378, 392, 393, 418, 426, 428.
 Pfaffenberg: 117.
 Pfalzburg: 98, 99, 102.
 Pfizer, Paul: 63.
 Pforzheim: 620 (and n).
 Philip Augustus: 7.
 Picard, Gen.: 47.
 „ M.: 618.
 Picardy: 331, 333, 338, 357.
 Picquigny: 349.
 Piedmont: 600.
 Pierre-Fontaine: 532, 537.
 Pierreville: 187, 269.
 Pietsch, L.: 632.
 Pillement, Col. von: 58.
 Pin: 480, 481, 482, 526.
 Pirmasens: 67.
 Pithiviers: 378, 379, 381, 382, 401, 402, 403, 406(n), 407, 410, 420, 421, 422, 556, 558, 559.
 Pittié: 352, 371.
 Pius IX: 606.
 Place de la Concorde, Paris: 326 (and n), 642.
 Plaine, river: 475.
 Plappeville: 159, 187.
 Pless, Prince von: 56, 622.
 Plessis-Moulin: 267, 268.
 „ Piquet: 264, 266, 267.
 „ Le: 439.
 Plombières: 479, 491, 493, 522.
 Plymouth: 571.

- Podbielski, Lieut.-Gen. von : 56, 648.
 Podewil Rifle, the : 54.
 Poeuilly : 367, 370.
 " Battle of : 366—8.
 Point-du-Jour : 158, 159, 161, 162, 163, 167, 168, 169, 171, 172, 173, 174.
 Poissy : 432, 433, 436, 439.
 Poix : 190, 191, 231.
 Poland : 3, 4.
 Polignac : 406.
 Poligny : 529, 531, 533, 534.
 Polish Insurrection [1863] : 52, 596.
 Pomerania : 37.
 Pomiers : 426.
 Ponlieue : 462, 463.
 Pont-à-Mousson : 102, 121, 132, 136, 156, 157, 159, 193, 210, 550. *Church in* 194.
 " aux-Moines : 424.
 " d'Héry : 533, 534.
 " d'Ouche : 494.
 " de-Gesnes : 456, 457, 460.
 " de-Pany : 491, 492, 493.
 " de-Roide : 530, 535.
 " du-Navoy : 534, 536.
 " Iblon : 286, 309.
 " les-Moulins : 532.
 Pont-Noyelles : 343, 344, 345, 346. *Nocturnal combat at* 346.
 " sur-l'Ognon : 510.
 " sur-Saône : 489, 508.
 Pontarlier : 483, 484, 490, 529, 532, 533, 535—9.
 Pontaudemer : 340.
 Pontoise : 263.
 Porcher : 159.
 Porte, Lieut.-Col. de la : 220.
 " de-Châtillon : *v.* Châtillon.
 " de-Longboyau : 284, 321, 322.
 " de-Trivaux : 265, 266.
 " Jaune : 318, 320, 323.
 " Marly : 280.
 " Verte : 320.
 Portugal : 13.
 Posen : 98, 104.
 Pott (a Landwehrman) : 563.
 Pouilly : 232, 529, 539.
 Pouligney : 527.
 Pouillet : 537.
 Poupry : 381, 418—20, 422, 445. *Map* 408.
 Pourron : 228.
 Pouru-aux-Bois : 234.
 " St. Remy : 233, 234.
 Pouxieux : 478.
 Poyer-Quertier, M. : 621.
 Prague, Peace of [1866] : 4, 5.
 Prankh, Gen. von : 29, 292, 595. *Portrait* 30.
 Prauthoy : 564.
 Préfort, Château : 392, 394, 396.
 Prémaux : 498.
 Prénay : 433.
 Prénos : 492, 493.
 Prénouvellon : 391, 396.
 Preuschdorf : 83, 84, 87.
 Prim, Gen. : 15, 17, 18, 21, 22.
 Prince Imperial in "baptism of fire" : 71.
 "Prinz" : 621(n).
 " "Adalbert", the : 568, 569, 574, 581(n).
 Pritzelwitz, Maj.-Gen. von : 59.
 Protestantism in Germany : 1.
 Provenchère : *v.* La Provenchère.
 Provins : 555.
 Prussia : 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 20, 21, 23, 31, 36, 37, 38. *Prussian Troops* : 50.
 Przychowski, Maj. von : 461.
 Puttelange : 109.
 Putziger Wiek : 583.
 Puxieux : 135, 157, 159.
 Pyrenees Mountains : 6.

Q

- Quatre-Champs : 223.
 Queleu, fort : 128, 185, 195.
 Querimont, farm : 246.
 Querrieux : 343, 345, 346.
 Quétigny : 486, 487.
 Quinet, Ed., quoted : 63.
 Quingey : 527, 529, 530, 534.

R

- Rackebüll, Battle of : 361.
 Radicals, German : 12.
 Radziwill, Prince : 627.
 Railway-System, French : 49.
 "Rainbow", the : 580.
 Rambervillers : 474, 475, 477, 478.
 Rambouillet : 378.
 Rambucourt : 136.
 Rameau, M. : 632.
 Ranke, von, quoted : 605.
 Rantzeau Gen. von : 563.
 Raon-l'Étapé : 474, 475, 476, 477.
 Raoult, Gen. : 48, 92.
 Raschpfuhl : 70.
 Rastatt : 62, 466, 467, 487.
 Rauch, Maj.-Gen. von : 59, 460, 627.
 Raucourt : 223, 226, 230, 240.
 Rebillard : 392, 393.
 Rebréchien : 421, 422.
 Recologne : 525, 534.
 Red Cross Service : 98, *v. also* Knights of St. John, of Malta.
 " Prince, the : 34, 131(n) ; *v.* Frederick Charles, Prince.
 Redern, von : 220.
 Reformation, the : 1.
 Regnault, Henri : 632—3, 639.
 Regnier, M. : 608.
 Regniéville-en-Haye : 136.
 Rehlingen : 66.
 Reichshofen : 74, 81, 82, 83, 84, 89, 92, 94, 95, 96, 105.
 Reille, Gen. : 252.
 Reims : 185, 203, 204, 205, 206, 212, 213, 215, 216, 217, 231, 235, 259, 331, 485, 495, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556. *Map of* 211.
 Reitzenstein, Gen. von : 298.
 Remilly : 193, 207, 208, 230, 231, 232.
 Remiremont : 478.
 Rémonville : 218, 219.
 Renault, Château : 450, 452.
 Renève-l'Église : 483.
 Renson, Gen. : 48.
 Renthe-Fink, Capt. von : 287.
 Renz, Col. von : 493.
 Reppertsberg : 110, 111, 113, 117.
 Republic, Proclamation of French : 259—60.
 Reserves, German : 63, 73.
 Rethel : 206, 222, 231, 235, 259, 331, 550, 551, 552, 553.
 Retonfay : 188, 189.
 Reuil : 283, 284, 318, 321.
 Reuss, Capt. : 265.
 Revigny : 218.
 Rex, Col. von : 171.
 Reyau, Gen. : 379, 396.
 Rezonville : 137, 138, 139, 144, 148, 152, 154, 155, 156, 159, 161, 162, 163, 164, 168, 171, 182, 183, 184, 200—1(n), 623. *View of* 135.
 Rheims : *v.* Reims.
 Rheinbaden, Lieut.-Gen. von : 58, 110, 122, 134, 135, 138.
 Rheinweiler : 82.
 Rhine, river : 65, 82, 466, 467, 469, 472, 487, 488, 600, 608, 646.
 " Canal : 504, 514.
 " Frontier : 2, 4, 6, 7.
 " " War on the : 61—72.
 Rhone, river : 488.
 " Canal : 504, 514.
 Richard I, of England : 7(n).

- Richelieu, Cardinal: 2, 3.
 Riedseltz: 77, 78.
 Riefe, Lieut.-Col.: 549.
 Rigault de Genouilly: *v.* Genouilly.
 Rille, river: 358, 360.
 Rioz: 480, 481, 506, 507, 531.
 Rive Gauche: 628.
 Robert: 404.
 Robert-le-Diable: 359.
 Robertsau: 465, 466.
 Robin, Gen.: 350, 351, 353, 354, 365, 366, 367, 370.
 "Rochambeau", the: 568, 584.
 Rochefort, M.: 11, 260, 290.
 Rochlitz, Maj.: 59.
 Rocourt: 374.
 Rocquencourt: 639.
 Rocroy: 548, 550, 552, 553, 455.
 Rogge, Herr: 637-8.
 Roggenbach, von: 629.
 Rohrbach: 120.
 Roisel: 355, 365, 366.
 Rolande, river: 404.
 Rolland, Gen.: 527.
 Romainville: 405.
 Rome: 599, 602, 606, 631, 639; *v. also* Italy.
 Ronchamp: 512, 517, 525.
 Roncourt: 158, 159, 174, 175, 179, 180, 187.
 Ronneberg, Maj.: 279.
 Ronville: 422.
 Roon, Gen. von: 9, 13, 15, 17, 32, 34 (and n), 56, 567, 571, 575, 628, 648. *Portrait* 8.
 Roquebrune, Gen.: 433.
 Rosières: 392.
 Rosnes: 214.
 Rosny: 294, 295.
 Rossay: 455.
 Rössel, Capt.: 563.
 Rössler, Serg.: 625.
 Rothe Berg: 106, 109, 110, 111, 112, 114, 115, 116, 117. *Battle on* 116. *Storming of* 107, 113.
 Rothmahr, Gen. von: 141.
 Rothschild, Baron: 608.
 Roumania: 13, 14.
 " Charles of: *v.* Charles.
 Rouen: 331, 333, 338-40, 341, 342, 347, 348, 349, 357, 358, 359, 360, 364, 366. *View of* 339; *Tower of Maid of Orleans* 358.
 Rougemont: 406, 434, 500, 504, 505, 506, 509, 530.
 Rougemontier: 359.
 Rougeot, farm: 521.
 Rouher, M.: 205, 260.
 Roupy: 366, 370, 371, 373.
 Rousseau, Gen.: 447, 456.
 Rouvre-sous-Meilly: 494.
 Rouvroy: 553.
 Roye, Gen.: 333, 359, 360.
 Rozerieulles: 171.
 Ruan: 413, 420.
 Ruardin: 462.
 Rubécourt: 233.
 Rubempré: 343, 345.
 Rudolstadt, Prince of: 630.
 Rügen, Island of: 575, 578, 583.
 Rulle, brook: 243, 245.
 Rumigny: 337.
 Rumilly: 375.
 Rungis: 279.
 Rupigny: 191.
 Rupt: 478.
 Russia: 5, 596, 598, 602, 606, 609; 621; *v. also* Alexander II.

S

- Saar, river: 66, 70, 71, 72, 98, 103, 106, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 120, 121.
 Saarbrücken: 65, 66, 70, 81, 106, 109, 110, 113, 114, 119, 120, 125, 126. *Battle of* 70-1.
 Saarburg: 97, 98, 100, 102, 475.
 Saargemünd (Saargeuëmines): 67, 70, 74, 81, 96, 106, 109, 120.
 Saarlouis: 66, 70, 126, 127, 608, 646.
 Saarunion: 98, 100.
 Sachy: 234.
 Saclay: 280.
 Sadowa, Battle of [1866]: *v.* Königgrätz.
 Saget, Gen.: 48.
 Saily-aux-Bois: 354.
 " Saillisel: 348, 349, 351, 357, 364.
 Sains: 337.
 St. Ail: 173, 174, 176, 178, 179, 180.
 " Albert: 247, 248, 450.
 " Amand: 447, 450, 451.
 " Appollinaire: 485, 486, 487, 539.
 " Arnould: 137, 139, 140, 142, 148.
 " Aubin: 353, 387, 428.
 " Avold: 67, 109, 110, 120.
 " Ay: 396 (and n), 430.
 " Barbe: 125, 127, 188, 191.
 " Benoit: 477.
 " Calais: 447, 451.
 " Christ: 366.
 St. Cloud: 28, 53, 311, 318, 320, 323, 630, 639, 640. *View of* 270; *Picquet at* 312.
 " Corneille: 463.
 " Croies: 463.
 " Cucufa: 318, 321.
 " " Ravin de: 284.
 " " Vacherie de: 283, 284.
 " Cyr: 41, 630.
 " Denis: 269, 271, 277, 283, 285, 288, 291, 292, 302, 306, 307, 309, 310, 323, 324, 325, 327.
 " Dié: 438, 447, 475, 476, 477.
 " Dizier: 203, 211, 212, 214.
 " Ferjeux: 508, 509, 510.
 " Florentin: 557, 561, 562.
 " Fuscien: 337.
 " Germain-en-Laye: 280.
 " " le-Grand: 422.
 " Gorgon: 537.
 " Gratien: 345.
 " Helena: 284, 469.
 " Hilaire-Maizeray: 136.
 " Hippolyte: 527, 530, 532, 535.
 " Hubert, farm: 168, 169, 170-3, 459. *View of* 167, 170.
 " Ingbert: 66.
 " Jean: 387.
 " " de-Braye: 425.
 " " de Losne: 489, 490, 491, 496.
 " Johann: 70, 114.
 " Juan: 532, 533.
 " Julien, fort: 129, 185, 188, 190, 192.
 St. Julien, du-Sault: 559, 561.
 " Juvin: 221.
 " Laurent: 529, 533, 534, 536, 537.
 " " des-Bois: 391.
 " Loup: 402, 424.
 " Lyé: 420, 421, 426.
 " Marcel: 137, 145, 147, 157, 161, 162. *View of* 162.
 " Mars-sur-le-Mont: 210.
 " Marie: 513, 537, 538.
 " " aux-Chênes: 159, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 183.
 " Mars-la-Bruyère: 451.
 " Martin, suburb of St. Quentin: 374.
 " Maur: 294, 325.
 " Meneshould: 103, 205, 210, 215 (and n), 218, 221, 551, 553.
 " Menges: 247, 248, 249.
 " Michel: 321.
 " Mihiel: 550.
 " Nicolas: 334, 337.
 " Péravy: 392, 393, 396, 410, 412, 420, 423, 426, 427.
 " Petersburg: 605.
 " Pierremont: 223, 230.
 " Privat-la-Montagne: 154, 159, 163, 165, 166, 173, 174, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 183, 187, 189. *Views of* 161, 176. *Assault upon* 179.
 " " Battle of: 154-81.

- St. Quentin: 133, 171, 187, 329, 331, 333, 341, 356, 363, 364, 365, 366, 267, 368, 369-71, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 550. *Map* 369. Battle of: 368-75.
- " *Engagement at* 373; *Faidherbe at* 372.
- " Remy: 76, 77, 476, 477.
- " Ruffine: 168, 170.
- " Sabina: 494.
- " Seine: 527.
- " Sigismond: 392, 396, 423.
- " Sulpice: 510, 511.
- " Suzanne: 517.
- " Valbert: 523.
- " Vit: 529, 530, 534.
- " Wendel: 71, 113.
- Saintry: 394, 395.
- Saizerains. Les: 136.
- Salazar y Mazarredo. Don: 14, 16, 17, 18.
- Salbris: 389, 390, 391, 392, 398.
- Salignac-Fénélon, Gen. de: 48, 249.
- Salins, and Château: 531, 532, 534, 535, 537, 608.
- Salis. Baron von: 617 (n).
- Salouel: 334.
- Salviati, Col. von: 59.
- Salzburg: 596.
- Sancey: 535.
- Sandrart, Maj.-Gen. von: 58, 265, 322, 635, 640.
- Santeau: 421.
- Santilly: 413.
- Saône, river: 479, 480, 482, 483, 484, 485, 487, 489, 490, 491, 492, 494, 495, 496, 499, 500, 505, 506, 526, 527, 532, 533, 539.
- Sapignies: 350, 351, 353.
- Saran: 384, 385.
- Sarbury, Plateau of: 629.
- Sarcelles: 269.
- Sardou, Victorien: 641-2.
- Sargé: 462.
- Sarnowski: v. Helden Sarnowski
- Sarthe, river: 396 (n), 399 (n), 449, 458.
- Sary: 384, 386.
- 'Saturday Review', quoted: 80.
- Sauer, river: 84, 88.
- Sauerbach: 83, 84, 88, 89.
- Saufieu: 337.
- Sauldre: 388, 389.
- Saulnot: 512, 525.
- Saulny: 180, 185.
- Saulon-la-Rue: 496.
- Saulx, river: 211.
- " les-Chartreux: 263.
- Savigne-l'Evêque: 456.
- Savigné: 463.
- Savigny: 451.
- Savoireuse, river: 501.
- Savoieux: 526.
- Savy: 370, 371, 373, 374.
- Saxe-Meiningen, Duke of: v. George.
- Saxon Army-Service Corps: 302.
- " *Cavalry man*: 217.
- " *Rifleman*: 299.
- Saxony: 26, 596, 611.
- " Crown-Prince of: v. Albert of Saxony.
- " George of: v. George.
- " Grand-Duke of: 56.
- " John of: v. John.
- Scarpe, river: 348.
- Sceaux: 265, 267, 268, 281, 457.
- Scey, river: 511.
- " sur-Saône: 489.
- Schachtmeyer, Gen. von: 58, 248.
- " Herr: 635.
- Schafbusch, farm: 79.
- Scheff's poetry: 639.
- Schéler, Maj.-Gen. von: 58.
- Schelike, Lieut.-Col. von: 500.
- Schellendorf, Lieut. Bronsart von: 628, 641.
- " Maj. Bronsart von: 57. *Portrait* 354.
- " Lieut.-Col. Bronsart von: 252, 634.
- Scherbening, Col. von: 57, 245, 256.
- Scheve, Capt. von: 322.
- Schillig: 574, 576.
- Schiltigheim: 465, 466, 469.
- Schimmermann, Lieut.-Gen. von: 59.
- Schimpff, Lieut. von: 214.
- Schirmeck: 475.
- Schleinitz, Capt. von: 15, 628.
- Schleithal: 77.
- Schleswig-Holstein: 13, 329, 575.
- " Campaign [1864]: 13 (and n), 51, 52, 56, 361.
- Schlettstadt: 471, 474, 485, 487-8.
- Schlossberg: 487.
- Schlothheim, Maj.-Gen. von: 58, 202. *Portrait* 231.
- Schmeling, Gen. von: 474, 487, 512, 530, 531, 532, 533, 535.
- Schmettow, Maj. von: 146.
- Schmidt, Col.: 437.
- " Lieut.: 554.
- " Gen.: 58, 457, 463.
- Schneckenberger, Max: 65. *Portrait* 64.
- Schneider, Louis: 622, 627.
- Schöler, Gen. von: 57, 225.
- Schröder, Lieut.-Col. von: 554.
- Schuch, Col.: 226, 228, 413.
- Schuler von Senden, Maj.-Gen.: 59, 341, 357.
- Schultz, Gen.: 242, 257, 258, 466, 635.
- Schwartzhoff, Lieut.-Gen. von: 57.
- Schwartzkoppen, Gen. von: 58, 149.
- Schweigen: 74, 76, 77.
- Schweighofen: 77.
- Schwerin, Gen. von: 117, 118, 140, 455.
- Seat of the War, Map of*: 1.
- Seckendorf, Capt.: 628.
- Sedan: 185, 190, 192, 205, 208, 209, 219, 221, 230, 231, 232, 234, 235, 238, 240, 241, 243, 247, 249, 251, 252, 254, 256, 385, 549, 554. *Map of* 236; *Suburbs of* 207.
- " Battle of: 235-52. *Map of* 237; *Capitulation of* 260; *Fugitive Frenchmen at* 254; *Napoleon and Bismarck after* 255; *White Flag on gate of* 254.
- Sedenay: 432.
- Seille, river: 124.
- Seine, river: 263, 264, 272, 277, 278, 280, 284, 295, 302, 318, 320, 321, 340, 358, 359, 360, 475, 478, 507, 513, 551, 555 (and n).
- Seine-et-Oise, Troops of*: 41.
- Selency: 370, 371, 373.
- Seltz: 72.
- Semécourt: 196.
- Semur: 495, 499.
- Senden, Gen. von: v. Schuler.
- Senegambia: 340.
- Senft von Pilsach, Maj.-Gen. von: 219, 233.
- Senonches: 399.
- Senones: 475.
- Sens: 556, 557, 558, 559, 561, 562, 563.
- Sepp, Deputy: 29.
- Sept Fontaines: 537.
- Serqueu Château: 437.
- Servigny: 127, 128, 184, 188, 189, 190, 191.
- Seubert, Col. von: 82, 555.
- Seurre: 490, 496.
- Seven Years War: 3.
- Seveux: 526.
- Sèvre: 280.
- Sèvres: 312, 314, 633, 639, 642.
- Sezanne: 555.
- Siam, French Wars against: 570.
- Siege-Gun, Prussian*: 54.
- Siemerling, Herr: 650.
- Sierck: 67.
- Sigmaringen: 21.
- Silesia: 37, 98, 104, 487.
- Silly: 125.
- Simon, Jules: 618.
- Simson, President: 28, 613-4, 636. *Portrait* 613.
- Sissy: 366.
- Sivry: 212.
- Skagen: 575, 577, 578, 586.
- Skager Rack: 575, 576.
- Skalitz, Battle of [1866]: 56 (n 4).
- Sochaux: 504, 514, 518.
- Soing: 500.
- Soissons: 331, 550, 551, 608, 624.
- Soleille, Col.: 48.
- Solferino, Battle of [1859]: 6, 55, 131.

Solms, Count: 631, 641.
 Sologne: 121, 383 (and n), 387.
 Sombacourt: 533, 535.
 Sombornon: 493, 494, 527.
 Sommauthe: 223, 226.
 Somme, river: 333, 334, 336, 340, 341, 343, 344, 348, 355, 356, 357, 358, 360, 361, 363, 365, 366, 367, 368, 370, 371, 373, 375, 550.
 Sommerance: 221, 222.
 Sommerfeldt, Capt. von: 628.
 Sonis, Gen. de: 400, 417, 418.
 Sorval: *v.* Le Bassor Sorval, Gen.
 Sougy: 410, 412, 413, 423.
 Soulié, M.: 631.
 Sound, the: 577.
South-eastern Theatre of the War: 484.
South-German Troops: 55.
 Soye: 530.
 Spachbach: 84, 88, 90, 93, 95.
 Spain: 3, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 32, 34 (n).
 Speier: 30, 67, 73, 75.
 Sperling, Gen. von: 57, 169.
 Speyer: 98.
 Spicheren, Battle of: 106—20, 361. *Map of 107; Capture of French on the Heights* 118; *Soldiers' Graves on* 119.
 Spiers: *v.* Speier.
 Spohr, Capt.: 549.
 Sporen, island: 472.

'Staatsanzeiger', quoted: 80, 636—7 (and n).
 Stains: 269, 286, 302, 309.
 Starkenfels, Maj.-Gen. v.: *v.* La Roche.
 Stauffenberg, Capt. von: 641.
 Stein von Kaminski, Maj.-Gen.: 58.
 Steinberger, Jäger: 232.
 Steinburg: 96.
 Steinmetz, Gen. von: 56, 57, 71, 108, 129, 157, 161, 168, 169—70, 171, 200(n), 282, 328, 648. *Portrait* 168.
 Stenay: 186, 205, 207, 218, 219, 221, 224. *Surprise of Sentry at* 548.
 Stephan, Lieut.-Gen. von: 58, 411.
 "Stettin, Bay of": 57.
 Stichling, Herr: 614.
 Stiehle, Gen. von: 57, 150, 183, 648. *Portrait* 183.
 Stift, wood: 111.
 Stiring-Wendel: 106, 110, 111, 112, 114, 118.
 Stoffel, Col. von, quoted: 64.
 Stosch, Lieut.-Gen. von: 56, 635, 648.
 Stonne: 208, 226, 230, 232.
 Stolberg-Werningerode, Lieut.-Gen. zu: 59.
 Stranz, Gen. von: 357, 365, 372.
 Strassburg: 49, 67, 74, 81, 82,

83, 99, 123, 124, 192, 273, 289, 485, 487, 500, 540, 575, 608, 609, 624, 637, 641. *Map of 470, Library* 471. *Medal of* 604.
 Strassburg, Siege of: 465—7. *Burning of* 469.
 Strubberg, Maj.-Gen. von: 350, 354.
 Stülpnagel, Gen. von: 57, 113, 114, 134, 139, 141, 455, 628.
 Stumpf, Capt.: 117.
 Stuttgart: 30, 68, 98, 611, 612.
 Suabia: 98, 104.
 Suckow, Gen. von: 60, 292, 612, 631.
 Suippe: 212, 218.
 Sulz: 74, 83, 84, 87, 88.
 Sulzbächl: 84.
 Surburg: 89.
 Suresnes: 283, 318.
 Surfond: 452.
 "Surveillante", the: 577, 583—4.
 Susbielle, Gen.: 294, 301, 303, 304, 305, 321.
 Suzemont: 159.
 Suzon: 486, 491, 528.
 Swan Hôtel, Frankfort-on-Maine: 621.
 Sweden: 611.
 Swinemünde: 572.
 Switzerland: 611, 621.
 Sybel, von, quoted: 14(n).

T

Tacitus, quoted: 101.
 Tagus, river: 2.
 Tahure: 218.
 Talant: 490, 493, 527, 528, 539.
 "Talisman", the: 588.
 Talleyrand: 4.
 Talmay: 483, 484.
 Tann, Gen. von der: 58, 226, 232, 239, 240, 379, 381, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 392, 394, 396, 408, 410, 412, 415, 418, 426, 439, 442, 636, 650. *Portrait* 379.
 Tanon: 414.
 Tausch, Maj.-Gen. von: 58.
 Tavers: 436, 437, 439.
 Tavey: 512, 513, 517, 518.
 Tein, Maj. von: 386.
 Temple, Gen. du: 399.
 Tergnier: 365, 366, 368.
 Terminiers: 408, 410, 412, 413, 417, 420.
 Ternant: 497.
 "Territorial Troops", French: 43.
 Tertre, Le, farm: 459, 460, 462.
 Tertry, Battle of: 366—8.
 Testelin, M.: 331, 341.
 Tête-Noire: *v.* La Tête-Noire.
 Thézy: 333.

Thiais: 278, 279.
 Thiaucourt: 133, 135, 157.
 Thierry, Château: 625.
 Thiers, Louis Ad.: 10, 24, 260, 289, 290, 605, 608, 610, 619—20, 631. *Portrait* 605.
 Thil Château: 491, 495.
 Thile, Col. von: 15, 57.
 Thionville: 49, 67, 190, 328, 601, 621.
 Thirty Years War: 2, 3, 37.
 Tholey: 71, 108.
 Thomas, Gen. Clément: 292.
 Thuringia: 98, 104.
 "Karl Wilhelm of: *v.* Karl.
 Tientsin: 587.
 Tillard, Gen.: 204, 249.
 Tille, river: 483.
 Tilloy: 353, 354.
 Tilsit: 34(n), 627.
 "Times", the: 600.
 Tixier, Gen.: 48.
 Tonnerre: 562.
 Tossé: 223.
 Touane Château: *v.* Le Touane.
 Toucy: 563.
 Toul: 102, 159, 182, 192 (n 2), 203, 212, 435, 474, 554, 563, 608.

Toupenay: 437.
 Tour, Le: 422.
 "à Claire": 256.
 Tournan: 555.
 Tournois: 396, 408.
 Tours: 332, 378, 379, 389, 398, 400, 402, 410, 421, 424, 428, 436, 438, 446, 447, 448, 451, 479, 483, 485, 556, 562, 609. *View of* 610.
 Tourteron: 218, 223, 230, 235.
 Toury: 378, 379, 396, 398, 401, 407, 408.
 Trahier: 512.
Transport of Troops: 66.
 Trefcon: 366.
 Trémoins: 518.
 Treskow, Generals von: 56, 59, 255, 418, 427, 442, 457, 466, 487, 488, 499, 503, 507, 514, 415. *Portraits* 442, 488.
 Tréveray: 209.
 Trèves: 62, 66.
 Triaucourt: 215, 218.
 Triebig, Col. von: 58.
 Trier: *v.* Trèves.
 Tripart, Gen.: 435, 437, 439.
 Triple Alliance, the: 599.
 Trivaux, farm: 265, 266.

- Trivaux, Porte-de: *v.* Porte-de-Trivaux.
Trochu, Gen.: 204, 205, 260, 264, 267, 271, 280, 289, 290, 292, 302, 303, 307, 310, 316, 317, 318, 319, 323, 324, 410, 577, 633, 639. *Portrait* 267.
Trogny: 423.
Tromper Wiek: 584.
Tronville: 139, 141, 142, 143, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 159, 161.
Troops: *v.* French, German.
Trotha, Capt. von: 288.
"Troupiers", French: 39-40.
Troyes: 277, 397, 401, 475, 479, 484, 489, 555, 556 (and n), 557, 558, 559.
Tshifu: 587.
Tuce: 427.
Tuileries, Paris: 448, 462. *Burning of the* 645.
Tümppling, Gen. von: 59, 279, 635. *Portrait* 279.
Turkos: 44(n), 76, 77, 89, 92, 98, 242, 378(n), 383. *Illustrations of* 39, 43; *At Wörth* 90.
Turkey: 3, 56.

U

- Uhlan, *Prussian*: 50.
" *v.* Military Index.
Uhrich, Gen.: 465, 468, 473. *Portrait* 471.
Ultramontanes, German: 12.
Ulzon Valley, *the*: 149.
Unger, Col. von: 57.
"Union of Embellishment", *the*: 635, 640.
United States of America: 611.
Universal Military Obligation: *v.* Conscription.
Unter den Linden, Berlin: 26, 33, 649, 650. *After the War* 649.
Urcy: 497.
Usedom, Capt. von: 636.
Usaar, von: 617(n).

V

- Vacherie-de-St. Cucufa: *v.* St. Cucufa.
Vadelincourt: 230, 231, 241.
Vaillant: 564.
Val-Suzon: *v.* Suzon.
Valabrègue, Gen.: 48, 135, 144, 146.
Valenciennes: 375.
Valérien: *v.* Mont Valérien.
Vallerois-les-Bois: 508.
Valleroy: 162, 163.
Vallièrre, river: 125.
Vallièrres: 187, 188.
Vancé: 452, 457.
Vandenesse: 494.
Vanne, stream: 225, 226.
Vanves, fort: 280, 290, 311. *Illustration of* 314.
Vany: 189.
Varennès: 216, 217, 218, 551.
Varize: 408, 423.
Varnbühler, von: 595, 612.
Varois: 485, 486, 487, 539.
Vassoigne, Gen.: 251.
Vaucluse: 403.
Vaucouleurs: 102.
Vancresson: 639.
Vaudoncourt: 520.
Vaudray: 530, 531.
Vaumainbert: 422, 425.
Vaulx: 170, 171, 232, 233, 350, 351, 354, 532, 534, 537.
Vavray: 218.
Velars-sur-Ouche: 491, 494.
Vellechevreaux: 509.
Vellefaux: 507.
Velloreille: 480.
Vendenheim: 467.
Vendeuil: 365, 367.
Vendeuvre: 397.
Vendôme: 388, 389, 391, 400, 442, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 458, 459, 461, 463. *View of* 448. *The Battle at* 448.
Venezuela: 588.
Vennecy: 424.
Venouille: 403.
"Venus", *the*: 588.
Vèquemont: 342, 344, 346.
Vercelle: 532, 537.
Verdes: 391 (and n).
Verdun: 122, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 140, 141, 153, 157, 161, 162, 186, 210, 211, 212, 214, 216, 218, 219, 496, 551, 553, 549, 550, 645. *View of* 213.
Verdy du Vernois, Col. von: 200-1(n), 622, 623, 633.
Vergé, Gen.: 48, 109, 114, 140, 142, 168.
Vermand: 365, 366, 367, 368, 370.
Vernéville: 156, 159 (and n), 163, 164, 165, 167, 168, 173, 174, 177, 182.
Vernon: 435, 436.
Verrières: 641.
" wood: 265, 267.
Versailles: 198, 264, 269, 277, 279, 280, 282, 284, 291, 293, 312, 318, 324, 331, 365, 484, 485, 494, 541, 608, 609, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 621. *Map* 319; *Bismarck's Negotiation at* 620; *Proclamation of Germ. Empire at* 616, 632; *The Park of* 630.
" and the Head-Quarters: 622-43.
" "General Government" of: 544.
" Porte de: 267.
Versailles: Salle des glaces: 317 (and n).
Verworner, Capt.: 227.
Vesoul: 479-80, 485, 488, 489, 491, 495, 500, 505, 507, 508, 512, 513, 531, 560, 564.
Victor Emanuel, King: 13, 597, 599, 606.
"Victoria", *the*: 574.
Viehbahn, Capt. von: 628.
Vienna: 31, 120, 215, 222, 315, 579, 605, 606.
" Congress of: 4.
Vierzon: 379, 445, 505.
Vigo: 586, 587.
Vilaines: 525.
Vilchat: 381.
Villa André: 629, 635, 640.
" Beurnmann, Barzeilles: 239, 240.
Villacoublay: 264, 265, 266, 267, 290.
Villafans: 512.
Villamblain: 408 (and n).
Villampuy: 391.
Villargent: 509.
Villars-Fontaine: 497, 499.
Ville-sur-Yron: 151, 203.
Villechaumont: 430, 432, 433, 434, 436, 439.
Villejouan: 439, 440. *Troops in* 439.
Villejuif: 277, 278, 279, 283.
Villemarceau: 437, 439, 440.
Villemonty: 227, 229.
Villeneuve: 318, 434, 456, 532, 534, 536, 537, 559.
" la-Guyard: 562, 626.
" St. Georges: 263, 291, 626.
Villepion: 411, 412, 413, 417, 418.
" Battle of: 412.
Villeprévost: 413, 414.

- Villerand: 415, 417, 420.
 Villereau: 422.
 Villermain: 391, 430, 433, 437, 440.
 Villers: 207.
 " Bocage: 343, 345, 375.
 " Bretonneux: 335, 338, 343, 364.
 " Contest
 " round: 336—7.
 " Carbonel: 365.
 " Cernay: 238, 244, 245.
 " Cotterels: 551.
 " devant-Mézières: 251.
 " devant-Mouzou: 228.
 " en Argonne: 215.
 " Farlay: 532.
 " l'Orme: 188.
 " la-Ville: 509, 511.
 " sur-Bar: 231.
 Villersexel, 500, 504, 507, 508, 509, 525, 527. *Map of 509.*
 " Battle of: 509—12.
 " *Street Engagement 511.*
 Villetanseau: 269.
 " Castle of: 323, 324.
 Villevallier: 559.
 Villevans: 530.
 Villevé: 411.
 Villevert: 430, 432, 433, 436.
 Villevoindreux: 395.
 Villiers: 294, 295, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 304, 305, 643, 644.
 Villiers, Battle of: 294—302.
 " *Map of 296.*
 " aux-Bois: 137, 163.
 " le-Bel: 323.
 Villorceau: 430, 435, 436, 437 439.
 Villours: 418.
 Vimercati, Count: 597.
 Vincennes: 271, 293, 294.
 " Vineta", the: 571.
 Vingeanne, river: 485.
 " Engagements at the: 483—5.
 Vinoy, Gen.: 205, 209, 231, 234, 258, 259, 263, 264, 271, 278, 280, 282, 292, 293, 294, 309, 316, 318, 324. *Portrait 280.*
 Vionville: 154, 155, 159, 161, 162, 164, 200(n), 455, 456, 457. *View of 136.*
 " Battle of: 137 *sqg.*
 " *Illustrations of 140, 142, 143, 145, 146.*
 Viseppe, river: 222.
 Vistula, river: 583.
 Vivenot: 405.
 Vitry-le-Français: 102, 205, 210, 215, 218, 555, 556.
 Vitzthum, Count: 598.
 Vivier-au-Court: 247, 251.
 Vogel von Falkenstein, Gen.: 59, 575.
 Voigts-Rhetz, Col von: 57, 133—41, 145, 148, 196.
 " Gen. von: 58, 134, 135, 138, 159, 161, 265, 403, 461, 463, 637. *Portrait 402.*
 Völk (a Freiwilliger): 63.
 Völklingen: 70, 119.
 'Volkstadt', the, quoted: 648.
 Volunteers, German: *v. Freiwilliger.*
 Voncq: 221.
 Voray: 480, 482, 506, 527, 531.
 Vorges: 531, 533.
 Vosges, mountains: 84, 97, 98, 100, 479, 482, 485, 487, 525, 539.
 " Chasseurs des: 563, 564.
 " Garibaldi's Army of the: 492.
 " German advance across 474 *sqg.*
 Vosne: 497, 498.
 Voss, Capt.: 117.
 Vouge, stream: 596, 597.
 Vougeot: 491, 497.
 Vouziers: 206, 208(n), 215, 217, 218, 219, 221, 222, 223, 551, 553, 554.
 Voves: 398.
 Vrécourt: 564.
 Vigney-aux-Bois: 209, 238, 247.
 Vy-les-Lure: 508.
 Vyans: 518, 522.
 'Wacht am Rhein, Die': 64—5, 65, 107, 473, 624, 649.
 Wacken: 472.
 Wadelincourt: 230, 231, 241.
 Wadern: 71, 108.
 Wagner, Capt.: 469.
 Walburg: 91.
 Waldersee, Count: 271, 288, 575. *Portrait 398.*
 Walther, Gen. von: 58, 268.
 " (rifleman): 214.
 Wangeroog, island: 574, 578.
 War of Liberation [1813]: 4, 35, 37, 51, 94 (n 1 and 2), 270, 594, 650.
 War of Secession, American: 581.
 Warfusée: 364, 376.
 Warniforêt: 226.
 Wartensleben, Col. von: 57, 200(n).
 Waterloo, Battle of [1815]: 83, 105, 119, 284, 649(n).
 Wechmar, Col. von: 482, 493, 518.
 Wedel, Gen. von: 149, 150.
 Wedell, Col. von: 536.
 Weichmann, Capt.: 583, 586, 591, *Portrait 583.*
 Weiher, Lieut.-Gen. Hann von: 59, 539.
 Weimar, Grand-Duke of: 614, 627, 631, 639.
 Weissenburg: 63, 71, 72, 74, 79, 80, 82, 84, 474.
 " Battle of: 73—80, 81, 94. *Map of 75; Assault of Bavarians at 76.*
 Wellington, Duke of: 649(n).
 Weltzien, Lieut.-Gen. von: 57, 169.
 Wendenheim: 102.
 Werder, Gen. von: 72, 76, 83, 464, 466, 467, 469, 472, 473, 474, 478, 479, 480, 481, 483, 484, 485, 488, 489, 490, 492, 493, 495, 499, 500, 505, 506, 507, 508, 510, 512, 513, 514, 516, 518, 520, 521, 522, 524, 525, 526, 530, 531, 533, 539, 557, 560, 561, 564. *Portrait 466.*
 Werder rifle: 54. *Illustration of 45.*
 Weser, river: 471, 474, 576, 582. *Map of Estuary 573.*
 West Indies: 570, 588.
 Westphalia: 98, 104.
 " Peace of [1648] 2, 4.
 'Westphälische Merkur, Die', quoted: 63.
 Wichmann, Col. von: 59.
 Wied, Prince of: 58, 640.
 'Wild Column': 625.
 Wildbad: 13.
 Wilhelmshaven: 568, 571, 574, 576, 582, 586, 587.
 Wilhelmshöhe: 255, 274, 608.
 William I, Emperor of Germany: 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 22, 23, 27—8, 33, 51, 54—5, 56, 66, 71, 76—7, 97, 153, 156, 157, 161, 162, 171, 200(n), 202, 207, 210, 232, 238, 249, 252—3, 255, 256, 291—2, 317, 318, 326—7, 446, 448, 466, 541, 567, 571, 595, 601, 613, 614, 615, 616, 619, 623, 627, 629—30, 638 (and n), 639, 642, 647, 648, 650; quoted 650. *Portraits, frontisp., 652. Departure for the seat of war 130; On Marly Aqueduct 273; His Dagger, Sword and Sash 630.*
 " II (Prince William): 480, 481, 482, 639 (and n). *Portrait 652.*

W

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>William of Baden, Prince: 478, 484, 485, 487, 499.
 " of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Duke: 58, 122, 144, 631.
 " of Württemberg, Prince: <i>v.</i> Württemberg.
 Willisen, Col. von: 512, 514, 516, 520, 525, 526, 531, 539.
 Wilmowski, Councillor, von: 627.
 Wimpffen, Gen. von: 209, 234 (and n), 251, 252, 252(n), 253, 254, 258, 603; quoted 209(n).
 <i>Portrait</i> 252.
 Winckler, Col. von: 422, 426.
 Winterberg: 70, 110, 111, 112, 114.</p> | <p>Winterfeldt, Maj. von: 628.
 Wittelsbach, house of: 614.
 Wittich, Gen. von: 387, 418, 420, 438, 439, 442, 457.
 Wittlich: 62, 66.
 Wittow: 583.
 Witzendorf, Col. von: 57.
 Woippy: 124, 195, 196.
 Wolff, Capt. von: 628.
 Woyna, Gen. von: 110, 112, 114, 118, 128, 188, 405, 463.
 Wörth: 74, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 158, 385. <i>Environs of</i> 85.
 " Battle of: 81—105, 466.
 <i>Map of</i> 86.</p> | <p>Wrangel, Count von: 57, 128, 132, 165, 177, 463, 648.
 Wülffen, Col. von: 140, 456.
 Württemberg: 4(n), 10, 30, 49, 65, 595, 612, 613, 615.
 " Duke Eugene Erdmann of: 631.
 " Karl of: <i>v.</i> Karl.
 " Prince of: <i>v.</i> Augustus.
 " Prince Eugene of [1813]: 153.
 " <i>Jäger</i>: 294; <i>Troops</i> 55.
 " William of: 627.</p> |
|---|---|---|

Y

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Yokohama: 587, 588.
 Yoncq, river: 222, 224, 227, 229.
 Yonne, Dept. of: 544.</p> | <p>Yonne, river: 507, 558, 559, 562, 563.
 Yron: 203.</p> | <p>Yvernaumont: 231.
 Yvré: 460, 462, 463, 464.</p> |
|--|---|---|

Z

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Zabern: 96, 97, 475.
 Zaluskowski, Col. von: 288.
 Zastrow, Gen. von: 57, 110, 129, 159, 494, 499, 500, 507, 536, 537, <i>Portrait</i> 534.
 Zeidlitz, Col. von: 222.
 Zenker: 219.
 Zeppelin, Count: 72.</p> | <p>Zeschwitz, Col. von: 58.
 Ziegler, Dr.: 636.
 Zieten Hussars: 222. <i>At Vionville</i> 142.
 Zimmermann: 517.
 Zinckenstein, Count: 150.
 Zinsweiler: 96.
 Zola, E., quoted: 443.</p> | <p>Zouaves: 40, 44.(n), 89, 91, 148, 226, 242, 284, 301, 386, 459, 460, 482, 646. <i>Illustration of</i> 460.
 Zur Lippe, Gen.: <i>v.</i> Lippe.
 Zweibrücken: 66.
 Zychlinski, Gen. von: 227, 229.</p> |
|--|--|---|

MILITARY INDEX

THE GERMAN ARMY

ARMIES

COLLECTIVELY: 35, 36—8, 49—60.

FIRST ARMY: 57, 62, 66, 67, 71, 72, 101, 108, 120, 121, 123, 133, 137, 163, 171, 182, 202, 328—76 (Distrib. of forces 348—9), 396—7.

SECOND ARMY: 57—8, 62, 66, 67, 71, 72, 102, 108, 112, 122, 123, 135—6, 157, 163, 171, 396—7, 398, 400, 401, 401—7, 446, 447, 450, 451—2, 489, 495, 556, 558.

THIRD ARMY: 58—9, 62, 66—7, 71, 72,

73, 76, 82, 83, 100, 102, 190, 209—60, 263, 379.

ARMY OF THE MAAS: 55, 190, 202—3 (its composition), 203—60, 263, 269, 272, 306, 307, 315, 333.

ARMY OF THE NORTH-GERMAN CONFEDERATION: 49—53.

ARMY OF THE SOUTH-GERMAN STATES: 49, 53—6.

ARMY OF THE SOUTH: 360, 525—41.

ARMY CORPS

I ARMY CORPS: 57, 59, 62, 114, 121, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 129, 159, 162, 184, 185, 187, 188, 189, 193, 196, 328, 329, 333, 336, 338, 339, 340, 358, 362, 364, 370, 371, 433.

II ARMY CORPS: 59, 62, 121, 132, 136, 159, 162, 164, 171, 172, 173, 182, 183, 187, 191, 202, 212, 218, 291, 305, 315, 504, 525, 526, 529, 531, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538.

III ARMY CORPS: 57, 62, 108, 111, 112—3, 114, 120, 121, 123, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 139, 140, 141, 142, 144, 148, 150, 153, 155, 156, 159, 162, 164, 167, 177, 180, 183, 187, 190, 202, 205, 217, 218, 378, 397, 401, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 428, 429, 438, 442, 444, 446, 447, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462.

IV ARMY CORPS: 57, 62, 67, 102, 121, 132, 136, 159, 182, 202, 203, 208, 210, 211, 212, 214, 216, 217, 218, 221, 223, 225, 226, 229, 234, 235, 238, 240, 244, 263, 269, 277, 302, 309, 322, 642.

V ARMY CORPS: 58, 62, 67, 72, 77, 78, 83, 87, 88, 89, 93, 94, 96, 97, 98, 99, 221, 222, 230, 238, 246—7, 248, 250, 263, 264, 266, 267, 269, 280, 283—4, 294, 309, 318, 322.

VI ARMY CORPS: 59, 62, 72, 98, 100, 102, 159(n), 218, 222, 223, 230, 231, 235, 259, 263, 269, 277, 278, 279, 293, 294, 315, 642.

VII ARMY CORPS: 57, 62, 66, 110, 111, 114, 121, 123—4, 126, 129, 155, 159, 161, 162, 163, 164, 168, 170, 171, 172, 173, 183, 184, 190, 191, 193, 328, 525, 526, 529—30, 531, 533, 537, 538.

VIII ARMY CORPS: 57, 62, 66, 111, 113, 114, 121, 136, 144, 148, 155, 157(n), 159, 161, 162, 163, 164, 168, 173, 183, 190, 191, 331, 333, 337, 339, 340—2, 347, 348, 349, 356, 360—3, 371, 530, 642.

IX ARMY CORPS: 57—8, 62, 121, 123, 132, 133, 134, 136, 144, 148, 150, 155, 156, 159, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 174, 176, 177, 183, 185, 187, 188, 190, 202, 397, 398, 401, 421—2, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 428, 438, 440, 446, 447, 451, 453, 454, 455, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 642.

X ARMY CORPS: 58, 62, 121, 132, 133, 134, 136, 138, 140, 142, 143, 147, 148, 150, 152, 155, 159, 162, 164, 182, 183, 187, 188, 190, 191, 195, 196, 202, 265, 397, 401, 402, 407, 421, 424, 438, 439, 440, 442, 444, 446—7, 448, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 457, 458, 461, 462, 464.

XI ARMY CORPS: 58, 62, 67, 72, 76, 77, 78, 79, 83, 85, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 155, 218, 222, 223, 230, 231, 238, 246—7, 248, 249, 250, 256, 263, 277, 284, 398, 642.

XII ARMY CORPS (ROYAL SAXON): 50, 58, 62, 132, 134, 136, 147, 155, 157, 159, 162 (and n), 163, 174, 175, 177, 179, 180, 182, 183, 202, 203, 210, 213—4, 214, 216, 218, 219, 221, 222, 223, 225, 229, 232, 234, 238, 241—4, 245, 251, 263, 277, 291, 295, 297, 298, 303, 305, 306.

XIII ARMY CORPS: 190, 259, 366, 447, 451, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 460, 462, 463.

XIV ARMY CORPS: 474—525, 526, 530, 531.

XV ARMY CORPS: 379.

GUARDS CORPS: 57, 67, 136, 147, 157, 177, 179, 202, 203, 210, 211, 214, 216, 217, 218, 232, 238, 243, 244—6, 263, 273, 284, 285—6, 288, 306, 308, 309, 326, 642.

I BAVARIAN ARMY CORPS: 58, 62, 67, 72, 76, 77, 78, 79, 83, 89, 90, 93, 94, 96, 97, 98, 209, 216, 218, 221, 222, 223, 226, 230, 231, 234, 238, 240, 243, 251, 252, 256, 263, 277, 280, 315, 378, 379, 381, 382—3, 386, 389, 390, 391, 392, 396, 398, 408—10, 412, 413, 421.

II BAVARIAN ARMY CORPS: 58, 62, 67, 72, 77, 78, 79, 82, 83, 85, 87, 88, 89, 90, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 212, 216, 218, 221, 222, 223, 230, 234, 238, 240, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 269, 280, 281, 304, 642.

LANDWEHR (afterwards RESERVE TROOPS): 59, 63, 64(n), 73, 100, 103, 191, 196, 278, 280, 284, 322, 332, 409 (and n), 466, 474, 504, 512, 514, 518, 520, 522, 542, 549, 550, 551, 553, 554, 557, 558, 560, 561, 562, 564, 575, 582, 639.

NEW ARMY SECTION (formed 7th Nov. 1870): 397—8, 399—400, 401, 407, 421, 423, 424, 430, 432, 433, 438, 439, 442, 445, 446.

WERDER'S CORPS: Composed of the Baden and Württemberg Field Divisions, *qq. v.*

DIVISIONS

INFANTRY:

1st Div. 59, 125, 126, 127, 329, 331, 333, 358, 370, 373, 375, 383.
2nd „ 59, 125, 126, 433.
3rd „ 59, 172, 302—3, 304, 532, 537, 538.
4th „ 59, 172, 539.
5th Div. 57, 113, 115, 134, 135, 138, 139, 142, 144—5, 228, 402, 406, 421, 424, 455, 456, 462, 464.
6th „ 57, 113, 139, 140, 141, 231, 421, 424, 451, 452, 462.
7th „ 57, 224, 226.

8th Div. 57, 224, 226, 240.
9th „ 59, 264, 265, 318, 320, 321, 322.
10th „ 58, 249, 283—4, 318, 321, 322.
11th „ 59.
12th „ 59, 98, 114, 279.
13th „ 57, 119, 126, 495, 499, 500, 504, 507, 529—30, 534, 536, 537.
14th „ 59, 108—9, 110, 112, 113, 117, 118, 126, 357, 507, 530, 531, 534, 535, 536, 537.

- 15th Div. 57, 169, 333, 337, 340, 341, 343—5, 346, 347, 348, 350, 353, 354, 355, 356, 362, 363, 365, 370, 371, 372—3, 375.
- 16th „ 57, 113, 148, 152, 169, 333, 337, 340, 343, 345, 346, 348, 349, 362, 363, 364, 365, 367, 368, 369, 371, 372, 374, 375.
- 17th „ 59 (and n), 212, 291, 397, 399, 407, 408, 413, 415, 416, 418, 420, 421, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 430, 431, 432, 434, 435, 437, 439, 440, 444, 447, 460, 463.
- 18th „ 57, 128, 132, 165, 176, 177, 422, 423, 425, 458, 460, 463.
- 19th „ 58, 135, 149, 450.
- 20th „ 58, 135, 148, 149, 150, 180, 422, 450, 461.
- 21st „ 58, 248, 280.
- 22nd „ 58, 280, 379, 381, 382, 385, 386, 387, 388, 396, 398, 399, 407, 408, 413, 415—6, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 436, 437, 439, 447, 457, 460, 463.
- 23rd „ 58, 174, 214, 224, 226, 234, 240, 243, 286, 302.
- 24th „ 58, 174, 214, 222, 224, 226, 234, 241, 243, 244, 295, 302, 303, 304.
- 25th „ (Hesse) 50, 57, 166, 176, 188, 429—30, 430, 438.
- Guard Corps:*
1st Div. 57, 173, 174, 175, 176, 179, 233—4, 244, 245, 246, 269, 273, 285—6, 302, 307, 309, 327.
2nd „ 57, 173, 174, 176, 234, 244, 245, 277, 285—6, 288, 307.
- Baden Field:*
Division: 59, 62, 67, 72, 76, 83, 96, 98—9, 102, 466, 471, 473, 474, 475, 476 *sqq.*, 483, 494, 496, 498—9, 500, 508, 510, 512, 518, 520, 522, 524, 525, 527, 530, 531.
- I and II Bavarian Army Corps:*
1st Div. 58, 226, 232, 238, 417, 423, 424, 426, 431, 432, 433, 437, 438, 439, 441, 442, 446.
2nd „ 58, 392, 413, 414, 417, 423, 425, 433, 434, 436—7.
- 3rd Div. 58, 240, 241, 263, 268.
4th „ 58, 241, 263, 265, 266, 268, 281.
- Hesse, Division of, v. 25th Division, supra.*
Landwehr (Reserve):
1st Div. 59, 342, 457, 466, 474.
2nd „ 59.
3rd „ 182, 184, 185, 187, 188, 191, 193—4, 195, 196, 202, 328, 329(n), 341 (and n), 342, 348, 349, 356—7, 362, 363, 365, 367, 368, 369, 370, 376.
17th „ 280.
Div. of the Guards, 59, 280, 284, 318, 321—2, 466, 474.
- Württemberg Field:*
Division: 53—4, 58, 62, 67, 72, 75, 83, 89, 90, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97—8, 99, 218, 222, 223, 230, 231, 235, 238, 247, 250—1, 291, 293, 294, 295, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 315, 642.
- CAVALRY:*
1st Div. 57, 59, 128, 159, 168, 170, 184, 397, 402, 421, 447.
2nd „ 59, 76, 82, 83, 102, 218, 222, 223, 263, 378, 379, 381, 382—3, 390, 391, 392, 393, 398, 401, 422, 424, 426, 432, 447.
3rd „ 57, 127, 128, 184, 329, 331, 333, 338, 339, 340, 343, 345, 348, 349, 350, 351, 353, 354, 355, 356, 362, 363, 365.
4th „ 59, 76, 82, 83, 94, 100, 102, 211, 215, 218, 222, 230—1, 353, 354, 355, 378, 379, 381, 382, 387—8, 398, 400, 407, 408, 410, 414, 417, 420, 421, 424, 426, 427, 431, 432, 447, 457, 458, 463.
5th „ 58, 108, 110, 120, 122, 134, 135, 138, 141, 142, 159, 162, 182, 202, 203, 212, 214, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 230, 231, 235, 238, 259, 263, 340.
6th „ 58, 108, 110, 120, 122, 138, 139, 141, 145, 159, 162, 182, 202, 215, 218, 221, 222, 223, 230, 231, 235, 259, 263, 378, 379, 398, 408, 421, 429, 446, 447, 450.
11th „ 259.

12th Div. 58, 159, 206, 210, 214, 218,
219, 221, 226, 232, 244, 259,
339, 349, 355, 362, 363, 364,
365, 367, 368, 370, 372, 375,
376.
Guards Corps:
Cavalry Div. 57, 218, 221, 346, 348,
349, 351, 357, 365, 376.
CORPS ARTILLERY:
1st Army Corps, 59, 127, 128, 336.
2nd " " 59, 302—3, 304.
3rd " " 57, 139, 140, 174.
4th " " 57, 226, 229, 306.
5th " " 58, 248, 265, 278.
6th " " 59, 212.
7th " " 57, 126, 167.
8th " " 57, 167, 343, 356,
365, 367, 375—6.
9th " " 57, 180.
10th " " 58, 179, 180, 403,
463.
" " Horse Artillery, 440.

11th Army Corps, 58.
12th " " 58, 174, 179, 214, 225,
226, 242, 243, 266,
295, 297, 299, 300,
301, 302.
Guards Corps, 57, 173, 174, 180, 244,
245, 246, 256, 309.
Baden Field Division, 59, 522.
I Bavarian Army Corps, 58, 232, 385,
395, 414, 415,
440.
II " " " 58, 240—1,
242, 265, 266,
267, 281, 282.
RESERVE DIVISIONS:
XIV Army Corps,
1st Reserve Div. 484, 485, 487, 489.
4th Div. of Reserve, 474, 475, 484,
485, 487, 488, 491, 499, 500, 508,
509, 510, 511, 512, 517, 525, 527,
530, 531, 532, 533, 535, 537, 538.
Bavarian Army Corps, 58.

BRIGADES AND DETACHMENTS

INFANTRY.

1st 240, 358.
2nd 240, 358.
3rd 336, 337, 339, 343, 348, 357.
4th 239, 240, 329, 339.
5th 304.
6th 304.
7th 301, 302, 303, 532, 533.
8th 493—4, 500, 521, 523, 524, 526,
527—9, 539.
9th 113—4, 139, 140, 196, 455, 459.
10th 140, 455, 459, 462.
11th 455, 459.
12th 455, 456, 459, 460.
13th 226, 227.
14th 227.
16th 365, 366, 368.
17th 249, 318.
18th 263, 268.
19th 250, 284.
20th 318, 321.
22nd 278.
23rd 263, 278, 279.
24th 263, 277, 279.
25th 126.
26th 136, 170, 171.
27th 126, 128, 170.
28th 128, 188, 190.

29th 337, 339, 340, 343, 344, 349, 350,
351, 353, 356, 366, 370, 373, 374, 375.
30th 337, 343, 345, 349, 350, 351,
353, 356, 366, 367, 375.
31st 338, 349, 357, 370.
32nd 171, 172, 337, 338, 339, 349, 370.
34th 417.
35th 425.
37th 401, 403, 404.
38th 196.
39th 401, 403.
43rd 250, 385, 419, 436—7.
44th 385, 419, 436—7.
45th 175, 179, 226, 227, 243, 244.
46th 175, 222, 243.
47th 175, 179, 299.
48th 175, 179, 219, 221, 238, 240, 298.
v. Dannenberg's Brigade, 507, 525.
v. Debschitz's Detachment, 500, 504, 512,
517, 520, 524, 525, 530, 535, 537, 540.
v. d. Goltz's Detachment, 493, 494,
495—6, 500, 505, 508, 510, 512,
517, 525, 530, 531, 535, 537, 538.
v. François' Detachment, 110 (and n),
111, 112, 116.
v. Knesebeck's Brigade, 530, 531, 539.
Baden Field Division:
1st 485—7, 493, 510, 517, 519, 534.

2nd 496.
 3rd 485—7, 491, 493, 496, 534.
 v. Degenfeld's Detachment, 474—5, 500,
 517, 519, 520, 521, 524, 539.
I and II Bavarian Army Corps:
 1st 386—7, 392, 393, 394, 409, 410,
 411, 426, 434, 437.
 2nd 394, 395, 411, 412, 414, 426, 427,
 439.
 3rd 242, 381, 385, 386, 392, 394, 396,
 415, 426, 427.
 4th 381, 382, 385, 386, 387, 392, 394,
 395, 411, 413, 426.
 5th 265, 267, 268, 281.
 6th 265, 267, 268, 281.
 7th 267, 268, 281.
 8th 267, 281, 282.
Landwehr (Reserve):
 East Prussian Brigade of 4th Reserve
 Div. 517, 518, 520.

Württemberg Field Division:

2nd 89, 95, 304.
 3rd 95, 247, 251, 258—9,
 CAVALRY:
 2nd 421.
 3rd 365, 372, 375.
 7th 376.
 8th 263, 423.
 10th 263, 378.
 17th 59.
 23th 233.
 24th 219.
 25th 58, 202.
 Dohna's Brigade, 363, 365, 367, 375.
 v. Redern's Brigade, 220.
 Reserve Cavalry Brigade, 357.
 v. Schmidt's Brigade, 457, 463.
 v. Willisen's Brigade, 525, 526, 531, 539.
 Württemberg Field Div. 218, 251.

REGIMENTS

INFANTRY:

2nd 93.
 3rd 126, 128—9, 147, 413.
 4th 129, 336, 373.
 6th 88, 92, 97, 242, 292.
 7th 88, 92, 242.
 8th 424.
 11th 148, 152, 425, 460.
 12th 113, 115, 117, 119, 140, 142,
 144, 455, 459—60.
 14th 247.
 15th 125, 126.
 16th 149, 403, 404, 405, 407.
 17th 461, 464.
 19th 341(n), 368.
 20th 117, 141, 145, 152, 455, 456, 459.
 22nd 413.
 23rd 279.
 24th 141, 145, 152, 455, 456.
 25th 512, 518.
 26th 227.
 27th 229, 386.
 28th 337, 345, 350, 351, 366—7, 373.
 29th 345, 370.
 30th 370, 466, 474, 481, 482, 510.
 31st 345, 395.
 32nd 90, 94, 249, 345, 387.
 33rd 337, 343—4, 346, 349, 351(and n),
 352, 354, 370.
 34th 466, 472, 474, 510.

35th 141, 152, 421, 452, 456, 459, 509.
 36th 128, 425.
 37th 88, 93, 97, 321, 395.
 38th 404.
 39th 110, 111, 112, 114, 116, 118,
 171(n), 386.
 40th 114—5, 148, 337, 346, 349, 353,
 358.
 41st 129, 362, 364, 365, 367, 371,
 372, 374.
 42nd 299.
 43rd 126.
 44th 125, 127, 129, 336, 348, 357,
 359, 370, 371, 373.
 46th 88, 93, 97, 249, 250, 284, 563.
 47th 77, 78, 80, 88, 98, 263, 265,
 266, 323.
 48th 113, 114, 115, 139, 140, 142, 455.
 50th 88, 97, 284, 292, 321.
 52nd 113, 117, 118, 140, 142, 144,
 455, 456, 459, 460, 462.
 53rd 110, 112, 116, 118, 461.
 55th 119, 125.
 56th 404.
 57th 149, 403, 404, 405.
 58th 77, 78, 79, 80, 88, 93, 320.
 59th 78, 88, 93, 322, 323.
 61st 564.
 62nd 268.
 63rd 279.

64th 141, 152, 452, 455.
 65th 337, 343—4, 346, 351, 353, 354,
 366, 370.
 66th 225.
 67th 474, 521.
 68th 337, 345, 350, 351, 353, 354.
 69th 349, 350, 354.
 70th 337, 345, 346, 349.
 71st 229.
 72nd 148, 561.
 74th 110, 111, 112, 116, 119.
 75th 418, 436.
 76th 418, 431, 440, 463.
 77th 110, 112, 115, 116, 118.
 78th 135, 138, 140, 145.
 79th 404, 452.
 80th 78, 90.
 81st 341(n), 369.
 83rd 91, 248, 385, 420.
 84th 422.
 85th 425, 460.
 86th 370(n).
 87th 78, 90, 247, 248.
 88th 90.
 89th 418.
 90th 435.
 91st 138, 145, 152.
 92nd 422.
 93rd 227, 229.
 94th 90, 94, 256, 419—20, 463.
 95th 90, 418, 419—20, 463.
 101st 226.
 102nd 222, 243.
 103rd 222,

104th 242.
 105th 242.
 107th 242, 243, 305.
 108th 226.
Guards Corps:
 Infantry Regiment, 396, 411.
 Regiment of Alexander, 286, 308.
 „ Elizabeth, 288, 308.
 „ Franz, 288, 308.
 „ Queen Augusta's, 288.
Baden Field Division:
 3rd 520, 524.
 5th 518, 522.
I and II Bavarian Army Corps:
 1st 387.
 2nd 98.
 3rd 423, 424.
 7th 98.
 9th 98.
 10th 226, 239, 279, 394.
 12th 386, 396.
 13th 239, 394, 395, 436.
Hesse, Division of:
 4th 438.
Württemberg Field Division:
 2nd 94.
 5th 94.
 CAVALRY:
 1st 222.
 3rd 219.
 5th 219, 396.
Guards Corps:
 Saxon Regiment, 221.

BATTALIONS

90th 321.
 106th 289.
 160th 321.
 v. Glümer's Battalions, 517, 518.
Guards Corps:
 1st Batn. 115.

2nd Batn. 117.
 Fusiliers Batn. 117.
 Pioneer Batns. 202.
Landwehr (Reserve):
 Eupen Batn. 520.
 Goldap Batn. 518, 522.

CUIRASSIERS:

4th Regt. 134, 151.
 6th „ 133, 152.
 7th „ 134, 145—6, 147.
 Brandenburg Regt. 455.

DRAGOONS:

1st Regt. 149, 150.
 2nd „ 138, 140, 144, 150.
 4th „ 263.
 9th „ 135, 138, 152.

10th Regt. 336.
 12th „ 113.
 13th „ 134, 150.
 15th „ 259.
 19th „ 134, 151.
 Rhenish Dragoons, 210, 212.

FIELD ARTILLERY:
 3rd Regt. 113.
 7th „ 110.

FUSILIERS:
 33rd Regt. 329, 351.
 39th „ 110.
 40th „ 70, 351.
 Fusiliers of the Guards, 179, 180. 5th
 and 6th Companies, 245, 246.
 Fusiliers of 15th Brigade, 269.
 Brandenburg Fusiliers, 142.
 Brunswick Fusiliers, 461.
 Hohenzollern Fusiliers, 113.
 Marine Fusiliers, 344.

GRENADIERS:
 1st Regt. 336, 357, 362, 365, 367, 370,
 373.
 2nd Regt. 179, 228, 344.
 3rd „ 342(n), 343.
 4th „ 346, 349, 367.
 7th „ 78, 79, 80, 94.
 Guards, Grenadiers of the, 288, 522.
 „ Saxon Grenadiers of the, 226,
 243.
 King's Grenadiers, 266, 323.

GUARDS, LIFE, 139, 142, 387.
 3rd Brigade, 176.
 4th Regt. 179.
 Prussian Guards, the, 159, 162 (and n),
 163, 166, 171.

HUSSARS:
 3rd 455
 4th 426.
 5th 426.
 7th 134.
 8th 125.
 9th 113, 349.
 10th 134.
 11th 110, 134, 144.
 13th 91.
 14th 95.
 15th 110, 128.
 16th 152, 222.
 17th (Brunswick) 144, 214.
 Guards, Hussars of the, 341, 354.

Hessians, 2nd Regt. 325(n).
 „ of the 14th Regt. 247.
 King's Royal Hussars, 350, 351.
 Zieten Hussars, 152, 222.

JAEGERs:
 1st Battn. 386.
 2nd „ 231.
 3rd „ 113, 114, 117, 139, 140,
 142, 265, 455.
 4th „ 225, 232, 277.
 5th „ 78, 90, 93, 249, 250, 320.
 7th „ 125.
 8th „ 344, 349, 351, 353, 366.
 9th „ 232, 425, 460.
 10th „ 403, 404, 461.
 11th „ 90, 248.
 12th „ 242, 370(n).
 13th „ 242.
Guards, 269.
Bavarian:
 2nd Battn. 93.
 4th „ 93.
 7th „ 394.
 10th „ 79.
Mecklenburg, 431.
Württemberg:
 1st Battn. 99.
 2nd „ 90.
 3rd „ 93, 98, 99, 257.

LIGHT BATTERIES:
 1st 110.
 5th 125.
 6th 125.

PIONEERS:
 7th Battn.
 Field Pioneers, 3rd Company, 113.

UHLANS:
 3rd Regt. 133, 152, 215, 427, 455.
 5th „ 354.
 7th „ 349, 362.
 11th „ 416.
 13th „ 134, 151.
 14th „ 354.
 15th „ 152.
 16th „ 134, 146.
 17th „ 212, 233.
 18th „ 232.
 Guards, Uhlans of, 159, 2nd., 341,
 Bavarian Brigade of Uhlans, 58, 95,
 121, 133, 218, 221, 263.
 Reserve Regt., 2nd. 474.

FRENCH ARMY

ARMIES

COLLECTIVELY: 35—6, 39—49.

ARMY OF CHÂLONS: 49(n), 203—9, 212, 217, 218, 220, 211, 223, 234, 335.

ARMY OF THE EAST: 505, 513, 525, 527, 538, 539.

ARMY OF THE LOIRE: 305, 315, 396, 400, 402, 410, 420, 423, 430, 438, 440, 442, 443, 445, 448, 464, 494, 505.

ARMY OF THE NORTH: 328—76.

ARMY OF THE RHINE: 47—9, 137, 143, 144, 205, 218, 261.

ARMIES OF 6TH NOVEMBER 1870: 292.

FIRST ARMY: 292.

SECOND ARMY: 293, 302, 307, 316, 318, 319.

THIRD ARMY: 293—4, 299, 309, 318.

ARMY CORPS

I ARMY CORPS: 47, 67, 72, 74, 81, 82, 91, 98, 101, 186, 203, 204, 206, 207, 208, 218, 234, 251, 266.

II ARMY CORPS: 48, 67, 70, 109, 122, 124, 125, 137, 139, 143, 144, 145, 159, 185, 188, 218.

III ARMY CORPS: 48, 67, 70, 109, 122, 124, 125, 137, 143, 144, 147, 148, 159, 165, 171—2, 185, 187, 193—5, 406.

IV ARMY CORPS: 48, 67, 122, 124, 125, 127, 137, 144, 147, 149, 159, 165, 185, 188, 195.

V ARMY CORPS: 48, 67, 70, 72, 74, 81, 82, 95—6, 97, 98, 101, 203, 204, 206, 207, 208, 209, 218, 221, 222, 224, 227, 229, 234.

VI ARMY CORPS: 48, 67, 122, 123, 124, 125, 137, 139, 141, 143, 144, 147, 159, 165, 166, 174, 180, 185, 188, 195, 204.

VII ARMY CORPS: 48, 67, 81, 101, 203, 204, 206, 207, 208, 218, 220, 229, 230, 234, 247, 248, 251.

VIII ARMY CORPS: 70, 74.

XII ARMY CORPS: 101, 204, 206, 207, 208, 209, 227, 229, 232, 234, 242, 251.

XIII ARMY CORPS: 205, 209, 234, 258—9, 263, 264, 278.

XIV ARMY CORPS: 263, 264.

XV ARMY CORPS: 378, 379, 386, 389, 390, 391, 392, 402, 410, 420, 423, 424, 428, 429, 448, 505, 506, 507, 509, 512, 513, 517—8, 522, 524, 527, 533, 536, 538.

XVI ARMY CORPS: 389, 390, 391, 392, 402, 410, 412, 413, 417, 418, 420, 423, 424, 428, 434, 436, 437, 447, 448.

XVII ARMY CORPS: 389, 399, 400, 410, 412, 413, 417—8, 420, 423, 424, 426, 428, 436, 437, 439, 447.

XVIII ARMY CORPS: 332, 389, 402, 405, 406, 407, 410, 421, 423, 424, 428, 429, 500, 505, 506, 509, 510, 513, 518, 519, 520, 521, 523, 524, 533, 538.

XIX ARMY CORPS: 428.

XX ARMY CORPS: 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 410, 421, 423, 424, 428, 491, 500, 505, 506, 509, 513, 518, 520, 523, 537.

XXI ARMY CORPS: 399, 400, 428, 432, 433, 434, 436, 437, 439, 440, 447.

XXII ARMY CORPS: 315, 332, 333, 334, 346, 349, 362, 365, 366, 368, 373.

XXIII ARMY CORPS: 341, 349, 351, 353, 362, 366, 367, 368, 371, 373.

XXIV ARMY CORPS: 500, 505, 506, 507, 509, 512, 513, 518, 522, 527, 530, 532, 533, 534, 536, 537.

IMPERIAL GUARD: 44, 47, 124, 125, 143, 159, 185.

CAVALRY RESERVE: 48.

GENERAL RESERVE ARTILLERY: 48.

GENERAL RESERVE ENGINEERS: 48.

ARMY OF 6TH NOVEMBER 1870:

SECOND ARMY:

I ARMY CORPS: 294, 295, 303.

II ARMY CORPS: 294, 295, 301, 303.

III ARMY CORPS: 294, 297, 300, 313.

DIVISIONS

INFANTRY: 46, 47.

I Army Corps:

- 1st Div. 48, 74, 92, 94.
- 2nd „ 48, 74, 75, 77, 78, 82, 83.
- 3rd „ 48, 74, 92.
- 4th „ 48, 74, 242, 251.

II Army Corps:

- 1st Div. 48, 109, 114, 139, 142, 168.
- 2nd „ 48, 109, 139,
- 3rd „ 48, 109, 117.

III Army Corps:

- 1st Div. 48, 109, 148, 168.
- 2nd „ 48.
- 3rd „ 48, 168.
- 4th „ 48.

IV Army Corps:

- 1st Div. 48, 127, 165, 174.
- 2nd „ 48, 127, 165.
- 3rd „ 48, 127, 165.

V Army Corps:

- 1st Div. 48.
- 2nd „ 48.
- 3rd „ 48.

VI Army Corps:

- 1st Div. 48.
- 2nd „ 48.
- 3rd „ 48, 139.
- 4th „ 48.

VII Army Corps:

- 1st Div. 48, 82, 89, 203, 226.
- 2nd „ 48, 82.
- 3rd „ 48.

XII Army Corps:

- 3rd Div. 448.

XV Army Corps:

- 1st Div. 413, 420, 421, 433, 535.
- 2nd „ 413, 420, 421, 422, 423, 425, 533.
- 3rd „ 392, 393, 413, 418, 420, 422, 423, 425, 426, 428, 517, 530.

XVI Army Corps:

- 1st Div. (Jauréguiberry) 395, 396, 410, 411, 413, 415, 430, 431, 436.
- 2nd „ 394, 448.
- 3rd „ 413, 448.

XVII Army Corps:

- 1st Div. 430, 431, 436.
- 3rd „ 439.

XVIII Army Corps:

- 1st Div. 518—9.
- 2nd „ 520.
- 3rd „ 518—9.

XX Army Corps:

- 1st Div. 533.
- 2nd „ 536.
- 3rd „ 532.

XXI Army Corps:

- 1st Div. 433, 437(n), 448, 456.
- 2nd „ 433.
- 3rd „ 433.

XXII Army Corps:

- 1st Div. 343, 346, 350, 351, 352, 354, 370, 371, 372.
- 2nd „ 343, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 366, 371, 372.

XXIII Army Corps:

- 1st Div. 343, 350, 351, 353, 354, 358, 365, 366, 367.
- 2nd „ 343, 350, 353, 354, 365, 366, 367, 370.

XXIV Army Corps:

- 1st Div. 532, 539.
- 2nd „ 532.
- 3rd „ 532, 533.

CAVALRY: 45, 46, 47, 151.

I Army Corps, 48, 89.

- II „ „ 48, 144, 146, 218.
- III „ „ 48.
- IV „ „ 48, 151.
- V „ „ 48, 219, 248.
- VI „ „ 48.
- VII „ „ 48.
- XVI „ „ 408, 410, 411, 413.

Reynau's Div. 379, 396.

CAVALRY RESERVE:

- 1st Div. 48, 122, 159, 185.
- 2nd „ 48, 92, 204, 218.
- 3rd „ 48, 122, 144, 146, 159, 185.

Divisions:

- Aymard's Div. 168.
- Barry's Div. 394, 395, 413, 415, 423, 426, 434.
- Bastoul's Div. 168.
- Beaufort's Div. 318.
- Bellemare's Div. 300, 301, 303, 304, 318.
- Berthaut's Div. 295, 297, 300.
- Blanchard's Div. 258, 259.
- Camô's Div. 430, 431, 434, 435, 436.

Causard's Div. 266, 267.
 Crémer's Div. 496, 506, 513, 518,
 519, 520, 521, 523, 524, 532,
 533—4, 536, 538.
 Courty's Div. 318.
 Deflandre's Div. 433, 437, 439.
 Deplanque's Div. 433, 436, 455.
 Des Pallière's Div. 390, 391, 392, 396.
 Dubois de Jaucigny's Div. 433, 434.
 Exéa's Div. 259, 271.
 Faron's Div. 295, 298, 300, 303, 322.
 Goujard's Div. 456.
 Hugue's Div. 266, 267, 310.
 Jauréguiberry's Div. *v.* 1st Div. XVI
 Army Corps.
 Jouffroy's Div. 455.
 Lacratelle's Div. 242, 251.
 Lespart's Div. 222, 225, 243.
 Malroy's Div. 295.
 Margueritte's Div. 204.
 Mattat's Div. 300, 303, 304, 305.
 Maud'huy's Div. 277.
 Maussion's Div. 267, 295, 297, 299,
 300, 303, 305.
 Martineau's Div. 426.

Michel's Div. 410, 489—90.
 Morandy's Div. 379, 381, 415, 416,
 438.
 Nayral's Div. 168.
 Paris's Div. 452.
 Peytavin's Div. *v.* 3rd Div. XV Army
 Corps.
 Polignac's Div. 406.
 Rousseau's Div. 456.
 Roquebrune's Div. 433.
 Susbielle's Div. 294, 301—2, 303, 304,
 305, 321.
 Vassoigne's Div. 251.
 Villeneuve's Div. 456.
 ARTILLERY: 44, 45, 467.
 I Army Corps, 48, 89.
 II " " 48.
 III " " 48, 172.
 IV " " 48.
 V " " 48.
 VI " " 48.
 VII " " 48.
 XV " " 392, 419, 521.
 XVIII " " 520.
 XXII " " 353.

BRIGADES AND DETACHMENTS

Aube's Brigade 406.
 Aynès' " 352, 353, 366.
 Bessol's, du " 332, 335, 336.
 Boisson's " 405.
 Bonnet's " 404.
 Bourdillon's " 391, 395, 411, 437.
 Brisac's " 405.
 Darié's " 392, 395.
 Deplanque's " 395, 411, 415.
 Derroja's " 332, 334.
 Durochat's " 406.
 Faye's Detachment 391, 392, 396.
 Förster's Brigade 366, 368.
 Gislain's " 368.
 Guilhem's " 279.
 Isnard's " 363, 365, 367, 368,
 370.

Jobey's Brigade 438.
 Lagrange's " 346, 370.
 Lapasset's " 139, 159, 168, 171.
 Lecoainte's " 332, 336, 337.
 Maire's " 93.
 Michel's " 91.
 Michelet's " 366, 370, 371, 373.
 Pauly's " 365, 366, 367, 368,
 373.
 Payen's " 346.
 Péchot's " 180.
 Pittié's " 352, 353, 372.
 Rebillard's " 392, 393.
 Robert's " 404.
 Tillard's " 204.
 Tuce's " 427.
 Vivenot's " 405.

REGIMENTS

INFANTRY:
 3rd 250.
 15th 263.

20th 147.
 24th 147.
 27th 233, 418—9, 431.

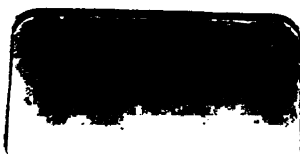
29th 378.
 40th 112, 415.
 59th 431, 432, 434, 436.
 87th 48.

88th 431.
 Algerian Infantry, 44.
 „ Riflemen, 44.

CARABINIERS: 44.
 CHASSEURS: 44, 47, 195, 202.
 „ D'AFRIQUE: 45, 204.
 Gallifet's Brigade, 247—8.
 2nd Regt. 150.
 CUIRASSIERS: 44, 45, 89, 144.
 5th Regt. 227, 228.
 DRAGOONS: 44, 45.
 12th Regt. 119.
 ENGINEERS: 45, 47,
 FRANCS-TIREURS AND LANCERS: 44, 45,
 195, 247—8, 271, 273, 277, 280, 284,
 378, 380, 388, 389, 391, 393, 396,
 399, 408, 434, 448, 471, 474, 487,
 491, 492, 496, 526, 527, 528, 546,
 551, 554, 555, 556, 559, 565, 566.
 GARDES MOBILES: 43, 45, 204, 215, 271,
 280, 281, 282, 332, 333, 334, 338,
 339, 357, 359, 378, 389, 395, 399,
 425, 427, 438, 471, 474, 483, 485,

490, 491, 492, 496, 527, 546(n), 548,
 554, 555, 559, 561, 562, 564, 566.
 12th Regt. 378.
 22nd „ 395.
 27th „ 435.
 71st „ 416.
 GRENADIERS: 44.
 2nd Div. 148, 172, 180, 205.
 HUSSARS: 45.
 MARINES: 425, 561.
 Fusiliers 399.
 NATIONAL GUARDS: 271, 289, 303, 315,
 316, 317, 324, 332, 357, 359, 378,
 483, 485, 496, 546 (and n), 454, 555,
 556, 562.
 REGIMENT GUIDES: 44, 205.
 SPAHIS: 45.
 VOLTIGEURS: 44, 172, 195.
 2nd Brigade, 148.
 ZOUAVES: 44, 148.

272



APR 29 1964

